WHY WE WENT TO WAR

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WHY WE WENT TO WAR

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President Woodrow Wilson.

WHY WE WENT TO WAR

BY

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PREFACE

I CANNOT pretend that the following account is dispassionate, and I realize that in preparing it I have done what Burke said he did not know how to do. I have drawn up an indictment against a whole people for their complicity in the crimes of the rulers whom they have accepted. As an American of South German blood, I confess readily to an inherited dislike and distrust of the Prussian. I have tried, nevertheless, to represent him in his habit as he lives, and to draw out fully the implications in his attitude and philosophy. My ancestors and the Prussian were poor neighbors, and the traditional bitterness of that quarrel may have obtruded itself. In the interest of making my contentions clear to others not so unhappily familiar with him, I may unconsciously have overstated.

For this reason, in dealing with the immediate causes of the war, in my desire to be fair I have treated the evidence the more scrupu-

lously. The documents quoted, which constitute the most serious indictments of Germany, are therefore drawn wherever possible, and almost entirely, from German sources. The remainder of the volume dealing with our international relations is based upon official communications and the results of government investigations.

Though I have presented some material recently discovered, and some old material in a new light, much, if not all, of the evidence has already been sifted by abler hands. I wish, therefore, to acknowledge my indebtedness to those upon whose work I have drawn most freely, especially to the Department of Civic and Educational Co-operation of the Committee on Public Information, the value of whose important monographs is not yet sufficiently recognized.

In preparing Chapter I, I have frequently fallen back upon *Conquest* and *Kultur*, by Professors Notestein and Stoll. In Chapter V it has been impossible to add anything of importance to "German War Practices," by Professor Munro, and in Chapter VIII I have

used the materials offered in the digest of "German Plots and Intrigues," by Professors Sperry and West. Professor Harding's "Outline History of the War," Mr. Altschul's "German Militarism," and the *War Cyclopædia* have been particularly helpful. I have used also the many publications of the *American Association for International Conciliation* and am especially indebted to its officers for permission to use their excellent text of Prince Lichnowsky's "Memorandum" in proof.

In dealing with the diplomatic correspondence between the United States and Germany, I have quoted the documents from the Special Supplements to the *American Journal of International Law* of July, 1915, and October, 1916, where they are accessible in accurate text and ordered form. This phase of the subject has been so authoritatively covered by James Scott Brown in his "A Survey of International Relations Between the United States and Germany, 1914–1917," that no later student can cross his path without being guided and enlightened on the questions of international law involved. Although it has in some cases been impossible

to compare translations with original texts, in no case has any document been cited about whose authenticity or general accuracy there can be any legitimate question. The important statements in Chapter III by Prince Lichnowsky and Doctor Mühlon have been acknowledged by their writers. The incidental sources of information are so varied that enumeration is here impossible, and some of the more important will be referred to in the notes.

I could have done justice to the friendly suggestions and assistance of my colleague, Professor Dana C. Munro, only by making this volume much more scholarly and adequate to its purpose. His aid and that of many other friends has made my task a pleasure.

CHRISTIAN GAUSS.

PRINCETON, N. J., August, 1918.

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WHY WE WENT TO WAR

CHAPTER I

FUNDAMENTAL ANTAGONISMS

IT is a mistake to believe that a declaration of war is the beginning of a conflict. It merely marks the transference of that conflict from the field of statesmanship to the field of arms. It is the last gesture of diplomacy, its *non possumus* in the face of an impending crisis. Wars, recent wars especially, are the final expression of seemingly fundamental and irreconcilable antagonisms between nations or races, and the entire world stands in arms to-day, not so much because boundaries are threatened as because national ideals are at stake. The declaration of war by President Wilson meant that since American principles were threatened by Germany, he, as the responsible ruler of the United States, could do no less than accept the repeated challenges and meet force with force. A love of peace he had shown from the very be-

ginning. Patience and forbearance had marked all his dealings with the Imperial German Government. Perhaps never in history had the head of a great Power reasoned so calmly, so earnestly, or for so long a time with a declared and impenitent aggressor. He had even been willing to waive points of honor which had caused wars in the past—the destruction of property, the destruction of life, plots of ministers and military attachés against the sovereignty of the United States. Germany had occasionally, as in the case of the *Frye*, agreed to make compensation, or had promised, as in the case of the *Sussex*, that an offense would not be repeated. Yet in the numerous exchanges of notes which had taken place between him and Germany's spokesmen, one thing only had become clear. Germany either deliberately would not or could not understand the meaning of the key-words employed so clearly and eloquently by the President. Germany did not comprehend or would not recognize the significance of words like law, right, freedom, justice, humanity. The diplomatic controversy had not, therefore, been able to clear up the cardinal

points at issue. It had merely set them into stronger relief, and made plain that in principles, in ideals, in all that to us makes life worth living, Germany and America were irreconcilably at odds.

Political differences, Aristotle has said, spring from small occasions, but from great causes. So it was here. The real causes and the real issues of the war are not to be sought in the Balkans or in the sinking of American ships. They are to be sought in certain fundamental national antagonisms. And it is in terms of these that future historians will explain the origins of the present conflict. It is too soon to pretend to do this fully or finally, but some light we shall, in the present chapter, attempt to throw on the question of why this war, which we did not wish, had to come at all. In later chapters we shall deal with the question of why it had to come now.

I have used the word antagonisms after careful deliberation. They are not differences which admit of present or peaceful adjustment. The gulf which divides the United States and Prussia is too deep and too wide to be easily bridged,

and we must not delude ourselves into believing that in a little while, through some sea change in German psychology, the points at issue can be harmoniously resolved. The Prussian detests democracy through interest and principle; to Prussia's governing class the idea of democracy by which and in which we live as a people, is the corrosive poison which destroys great states. The German ideas on the mission of Germany, on the constitution and morality of states and on the place and function of an army are not only divergent from but absolutely incompatible with ours. Were the Prussian allowed to realize the dearest purposes for which he is now desperately fighting, and for which he is willing to sacrifice himself, there would and could be no place in the world for another nation, equal in rights and privileges with his own. Our idea is, live and let live; his idea is, live and let all others minister to your life or die. His conception is well expressed by Doctor Carl Peters, the well-known German traveller:

"Not to live and let live, but to live and direct the lives of others, that is power. To

bring peoples under our rational influence in order to put their affairs on a better footing, that is more glorious power."

But what of the good fellow we used to know, the docile, blue-eyed, fair-haired German Michel who loved his pipe and his bowl and his fiddlers three? Some such there are, to be sure, but to all intents and purposes, as coin of the realm they have gone out of circulation. For the most part they have been recalled and reminted; the government has cut a new die, has given them a new appearance and a new psychology, not Falstaffian and *gemüthlich*, but disciplined and heroic, and they now wear the *Pickelhaube* and sing *Deutschland über Alles*. Docile they still are, clay in the potter's hand; that is why they have changed, for they have accepted a new master, who boasts that he has power of life and death upon them, and they accept this domination, this submission to a megalomaniac prince of the house of Hohenzollern. Why this is so and under what unhappy compulsion such a change has taken place will be later abundantly evident.

But, you will say, will this not end of its own

impossibility? — even the Russians revolted. Yes, but the German people will not revolt. Not only have they learned the habit of submission through the penalties of protest, but their belief in their rulers and in themselves as God's chosen people, destined to inherit and redeem the earth, has been so subtly and persistently instilled into them that they accept the rigorous control of their masters as a part of their great mission. It they did not they would have revolted long ago under that tyranny tempered by success, the rule of force and fraud of Bismarck. Perfect embodiment of the Prussian spirit, avatar of Frederick and the Great Elector, he was worshipped by all Prussians, has become the hero of most Germans and, alas, of some Americans. Under this Machiavellian hero, Germany was rising to the moral heights which made it possible to applaud the dishonest Ems Despatch which caused the Franco-Prussian War. But he was the true servant of the house of Hohenzollern, died a prince, full of years and honors, and in Prussia his spirit goes marching on. Under the influence of a more compelling idea than Bismarck ever had in his

service, Bismarckism is more powerful in Germany than ever it was. He set the standard of their present political morality. His successors are less astute but more unscrupulous. They are even more grasping and more eager, for they have discovered new incentives. Let us not quote Bernhardi, who was read comparatively little. Let us cite a leader of a large wing of German public opinion, Daniel Frymann, whose book, "If I Were the Kaiser," went through twenty-one printings in the three years from 1911 to 1914:

"Since Bismarck retired there has been a complete change of public opinion. It is no longer proper to say: 'Germany is satisfied.' Our historical development and our economic needs show that we are once more hungry for territory, and this situation compels Germany to follow paths unforeseen by Bismarck."

Whither these paths would lead is evident from the following programme announced by Bronsart von Schellendorf:

"Do not let us forget the civilizing task which the decrees of Providence have assigned to us. Just as Prussia was destined to be the nucleus of Germany, so the regenerated Ger-

many shall be the nucleus of a future empire of the West. And in order that no one shall be left in doubt we proclaim from henceforth that our continental nation has a right to the sea, not only to the North Sea, but to the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. Hence we intend to absorb one after another all the provinces which neighbor on Prussia. We will successively annex Denmark, Holland, Belgium, northern Switzerland, then Trieste and Venice, finally northern France, from the Sambre to the Loire. This programme we fearlessly pronounce. It is not the work of a madman. The empire we intend to found will be no Utopia. We have ready to hand the means of founding it, and no coalition in the world can stop us."*

It takes a long while for news to travel oversea, and the American Rip van Winkle imagined that he was still living in the time of the early Christians. Here is a story which really happened. In the twentieth century, on August 3, 1914, before the representatives of nearly 70,000,000 people of every class, the speaker arose and announced:

"To-day our armies, your brothers and sons have been sent, not by your mandate, but by

* Bronsart von Schellendorf, quoted by H. A. L. Fisher, in "The War, Its Causes and Issues," 1914, p. 16.

your master's order, into a neighboring unarmed land. It is an invasion by force; they will go with cavalry and cannon to live in that land, to take possession of telegraph and trains. It is a country with which we are at peace, against which we have no grievance. It has never wronged us. We are even bound by treaty not to do this, and your minister of foreign affairs and your minister of war promised you last year that this would not be done. We have given our word as a nation. I know that what we are doing is contrary to international law."*

But, you say, at this point delegates, outraged and excited, rose on the right, in the centre, on the left, and interrupted, shouting: "But—but—this is unheard of—this spells national disgrace; this is betrayal of trust, dishonor."

No, neither on the left nor in the centre nor on the right. No one rose, no one interrupted. They did not even shuffle their feet. The speaker concluded: "Necessity knows no law." They listened, thought it over, were proud and pleased. They applauded.

The listeners were the chosen representatives of all Germany. The speaker was Chancellor

* See documents on the "Violation of Belgian Neutrality," Appendix I.

von Bethmann-Hollweg, a German semi-liberal, by your leave, more liberal than ever were Michaelis or Hertling, and the occasion was a solemn session of the German Reichstag.* No, there is no great difference between the German people and their rulers. Let us not make that fatal and irretrievable mistake. The difference is between the German people and ourselves. Napoleon, who was somewhat of a connoisseur and uncommonly discerning in such heraldry, said that Prussia was hatched out of a cannon-ball. He was right, and it is a lusty game-cock. He does not strut in innocent pride and open jactancy and crow like Chanticleer to wake the world to labor and joy o' the sun. He is swift, indirect, ruthless, and his name is Militarism.

But, you will say, the time was critical, they were stricken by fear. It could never happen again. It did happen again at Brest-Litovsk, when the masters of this race made peace with an infant republic beguiled by trustful and childish ideas of liberty. They signed a solemn treaty. Germany's former enemies disbanded

* In the above passage I have not quoted or even paraphrased Von Bethmann-Hollweg's speech. I have tried to bring out its implications as they were known to the body he was addressing. For exact text see Appendix I.

their armies. Then against this exhausted nation, at peace with them, German soldiers made war. You wonder at this. Remember that you are dealing with a new spirit and a new force. Listen to the great prophet Nietzsche in "Zarathustra":

"Ye shall love peace as a means to new wars, and the short peace better than the long. I do not advise you to work, but to fight. I do not advise you to compromise and make peace, but to conquer. . . . Let your labor be fighting and your peace victory. You say that a good cause hallows even war. I tell you that a good war hallows every cause."

This peace at Brest-Litovsk was no historical accident; it was an excellent, an ideal, a German peace. It fulfilled all conditions. A good peace should begin a war not end one, and this veritable triumph of modern German philosophy and statecraft, this Walhalla peace, ended before it ever began. But it may be objected that Nietzsche was a philosopher, a rhapsodist mumbling in his dreams, that what he said was only suggestion and read exclusively by university professors. The parents and children of Germany do not sympathize with such doc-

trine. Let us turn the pages of the Prussian Book of Life and read what is written and, so far as we know, approved by many mothers and their sons. *Jung Deutschland* is the official organ of Young Germany. It announces in an issue of October, 1913:

"War is the noblest and holiest expression of human activity. For us, too, the glad, great hour of battle will strike. Still and deep in the German heart must live the joy of battle and the longing for it. Let us ridicule to the utmost the old women in breeches who fear war and deplore it as cruel and revolting. No; war is beautiful. Its august sublimity elevates the human heart beyond the earthly and the common. In the cloud palace above sit the heroes, Frederick the Great and Blücher and all the men of action—the Great Emperor, Moltke, Roon, Bismarck—are there as well, but not the old women who would take away our joy in war. When here on earth a battle is won by German arms and the faithful dead ascend to heaven, a Potsdam lance-corporal will call the guard to the door and 'Old Fritz' (Frederick the Great), springing from his golden throne, will give the command to present arms. That is the heaven of Young Germany."*

* The Pan-German citations in this chapter whose source is not otherwise indicated will for the most part be found in *Conquest* and *Kultur*, by Professors Notestein and Stoll, by whom they were controlled. (Committee on Public Information.)

"Such," our Committee on Public Information informs us, "are the doctrines taught to young boys of about the age of our Boy Scouts."

Grasping at straws in the flood we have said to ourselves, but in the Social Democrats there is health and hope for a future of peace. With them we can argue. They will understand us. What of Harden, who sometimes has criticised his government and sometimes has praised President Wilson, and whose great Socialist paper has occasionally been suppressed? Germany has been preparing for war for many years. She had come near precipitating one at the time of the Morocco dispute of 1911.

When war did not result, he, the Social Democrat and Jew, wrote with the same sense of aggrievance, of wounded national pride that marked the *Evangelical Church Journal*, which concluded its article with the words: "From one end of Germany to the other people voice but one question: 'When do we get our marching orders?'" Harden was merely more eloquent.

"We might say that the hostile arrogance of the western powers releases us from all our treaty obligations, throws open the doors of our

verbal prison-house, and forces the German Empire, resolutely defending her vital rights, to revive the ancient Prussian policy of conquest. . . .

"All Morocco in the hands of Germany; German cannon on the routes to Egypt and India; German troops on the Algerian frontier; this would be a goal worthy of great sacrifices. . . .

"When we can put 5,000,000 German soldiers into the field we shall be able to dictate to France the conditions upon which she may preserve the empire of northern Africa—'New France'—with her brown Algerian troops. . . . We have entered upon a struggle in which the stake is the power and future of the German Empire."

In spite of his protests in late July, this political weathercock was better pleased in 1914, when in December war was actually under way, and he could write in exultation:

"Cease the pitiful attempts to excuse Germany's action. No longer wail to strangers, who do not care to hear you, telling them how dear to us were the smiles of peace we had smeared like rouge upon our lips, and how deeply we regret in our hearts that the treachery of conspirators dragged us unwillingly into a forced war. . . . That national something you must conceal from foreign eyes. . . . Not as

weak-willed blunderers have we undertaken the fearful risk of this war. We wanted it. Because we had to wish it and could wish it. May the Teuton devil throttle those whiners whose pleas for excuses make us ludicrous in these hours of lofty experience. We do not stand, and shall not place ourselves, before the court of Europe. Germany strikes. If it conquers new realms for its genius, the priesthood of all the gods will sing songs of praise to the good war. . . . We are waging this war not in order to punish those who have sinned, nor in order to free enslaved peoples, and thereafter to comfort ourselves with the unselfish and useless consciousness of our own righteousness. We wage it from the lofty point of view and with the conviction that Germany, as a result of her achievements and in proportion to them, is justified in asking and must obtain wider room on earth for development and for working out the possibilities that are in her."

Liebknecht, too, was swept off his feet, and in the beginning was for war, as he himself told Ambassador Gerard. Sword-rattling in Germany, therefore, is not confined to the heretochs. The thousands of German people who read, "If I Were the Kaiser," thought William II was doing pretty well, only that he was too hesitant, too lacking in the courage of

German conviction to take advantage of historic opportunities. Let us not, therefore, trust to any revolt against the Kaiser. He is no worse than many of his followers; indeed, he is not so bad. Until 1911, at least, he held them in leash. Let us rather try to understand Wilhelm II, for with him at present we must deal, and compared to many of his subjects he has mansuetude and a touch of gentility.

In the meantime we must seek to understand also a great but alien people of which he is in name and in fact the head. To understand this people we must seek out the springs which govern its actions. To compass it we must know to what stimuli it responds.

The central and ineradicable difference between America and Germany is the difference between freedom and autocracy, between feudalism and democracy. This has been repeated so frequently that we think we comprehend, but in reality we do not. Our most serious error, and it was one which we shared with our President, was to believe that the German autocracy was one which existed solely through the force of the ruler. The Kaiser's subjects, we said, are

unwilling slaves who have not cast him off only because they could not. This is worlds removed from the truth. The German state is not an amalgam forced into cohesion and unity by mere pressure from above. Austria is so in large part and it may disintegrate. Germany for the present will not. It is the most recent but at the same time the most powerful of all the great single states. Let us at least have learned this from four years of bitter experience. It has withstood many shocks, shocks which would have wrecked many a stanch commonwealth. For it has the two requisites of a stable and enduring state which Siéyès pointed out to Napoleon. "Power," he said, "must come from above. Confidence from below." And the German state has not only power and confidence coming from above and below, but the two are so subtly interfused that no allied statesman has yet been able to discover a serious split or any marked line of cleavage.

If Germany were what we imagined it to be, the war could have been ended quickly and almost without bloodshed. It would simply have been necessary for the allied aeroplanes to

deluge the German trenches and back lines with copies of President Wilson's speeches. One copy in the hands of each German soldier would have ended the conflict. When their officers were out of sight and hearing, and they often are, the privates would have held hurried whispered conferences. They would have waited until nightfall, have silently slunk over the top in platoons, have crossed through the hush of No Man's Land, and with a shout and sense of pride and relief have thrown themselves into the arms of their deliverers, the French, English, and American troops, who are in very truth fighting for liberty and justice. Why have they not done this?

In Austria, the President's speeches have been, and are, being heard, and to the Czecho-Slovaks, the Jugo-Slavs, they are becoming what they are to us, a charter for the future. Yet in Germany Woodrow Wilson's speeches are printed, garbled at times to be sure, but often in toto and without change, and the Chancellors Michaelis and Hertling have boldly answered them before the Reichstag and the country, and even combated his ultraliberal, just, and generous

terms of peace. The great mass of the people do not heed them, for they are listening to what for them is a higher music than that of the most ringing and eloquent expositions of humane and democratic principles ever pronounced by a statesman. To have expected the Germans to revolt after hearkening to them was as futile as it would have been to expect a mile-post to dance after we had whistled a jig. Why? The answer lies in a single phrase, almost as common in Germany as liberty in America. That phrase is *Das Deutschtum.*

Das Deutschtum is the secret of this war, of its deep-rooted origin, its progress, and its continuance. The German is fighting not for humanity, but as the Mohammedan fought and died for Islam, the German is fighting for *Das Deutschtum.* It explains Nietzsche and *Kultur;* it explains Pan-Germanism; it explains the push into the Balkans, the Bagdad Bahn. It explains the speech of Bethmann-Hollweg and the silence of the Reichstag; it explains the horrors of Belgium and the shelling of Rheims. It explains *Gott strafe England,* the sinking of the *Lusitania,* and the *Lusitania* medal; it

explains the Zimmermann note, German intrigue, and Brest-Litovsk. It explains the Kaiser, the Crown Prince, and the German butcher, baker, and candlestick-maker turned soldier, and, alas, only too often assassin. For *Das Deutschtum* is above our ideas of right and wrong. It is beyond good and evil.

It is more powerful than nature, it is greater than history, it is God's only hope of the world. Through it and through it alone can nature, history, and God realize themselves.

It seems preposterous. That is why we have not believed it. But it is the fact and we must face it, for we are fighting not the Kaiser, not the Crown Prince and the Junkers, not the German people. They exist only by and through it. We are fighting *Das Deutschtum.*

And what is *Das Deutschtum?* It is the mystic conception of the mission, the power, and the privileges of the German people which is to be realized by the German state. It has no principles. It is above them. It has a programme. It seems simple and absurd. But equal absurdities have deluded great peoples, and in history the influence and power of a

conception does not depend upon its truth, but upon the number and determination of those who hold it. A madman with a delusion is more dangerous than a professor with the documents.

We have not understood the working of this spring to which the German responds, for we have not, indeed, none of the Allies have, anything which remotely corresponds to it in our national life. There is no parallel conception, and, therefore, no parallel word in French or Italian or English. When, for instance, we use the word Americanism we think of the principles by which we live, the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We have chosen them as the foundation of our life. It is an inclusive conception, any man may share in these blessings and share in them equally whether he or his forefathers were Englishmen or Italians or Germans or Russians. Not only are we pleased to have the individual do this, but we are gratified when we find other nations like our allies which adopt much the same policy of liberalism and democracy.

Not so with *Deutschtum*. It is the very op-

posite. It is exclusive, intolerant; it is virulent international chauvinism. Its rights and privileges can be shared only by those who are of German blood. All others must recognize these rights. It is not something of their own election which the Germans have arbitrarily chosen to do. It is, so they believe, a mandate from on high. The Almighty has made them the strongest, the most scientific, the most cultured people in the world. The earth and what it contains belongs, or should belong, to them. They as the greatest and most just of peoples will see to it that these bounties are properly used and distributed. For this reason coal and iron deposits in degenerate France and Belgium will be administered by them. Could anything be fairer? We cannot, indeed they cannot, specify all the innumerable petty details of this new and necessary adjustment. "In short," as one of their spokesmen has said, "we must be allowed to be the judges of what we shall take." *

* There is in Germany as in all other lands a great mass of the population which does not think, which has few ideas on domestic policy and none on foreign. The way in which the world is governed is to them a mystery. They know only that men must obey their rulers, and in

The Kaiser has said it:

"Great ideals have become for us Germans a permanent possession, while other nations have lost them. The German nation is now the only people left which is called upon to protect, cultivate, and promote these grand ideals."

There is no question of this, but in order that you may not encounter ignorance and prejudice let us ask almost any German, even the most intelligent. What will Adolf Lasson, professor of philosophy at the University of Berlin, have to say?

"One cannot rest neutral in relationship to Germany and the German people. Either one must consider Germany as the most perfect political creation that history has known, or must approve her destruction, her extermination. A man who is not a German knows nothing of Germany. We are morally and in-

Germany they have a far higher respect for constituted authority than in other lands. If ignorance is innocence, this large group may be absolved from the guilt of this war. There is another group of intelligent Germans who do not agree with the conceptions set forth. Numerically this group is probably a large one, but it has shown itself to be a fairly impotent party of protest. When we attribute the foregoing and following ideas to Germany, therefore, these exceptions must be made, but we must remember that these ideas are held consciously by the ruling class that are Germany, and are unconsciously accepted by the obedient great mass of the unthinking. They provide the motivation for Germany's acts of aggression.

tellectually superior to all, without peers. It is the same with our organizations and with our institutions."

Or Ernst Haeckel, of Jena, the most widely known of German biologists:

"One single highly cultivated German warrior of those who are, alas, falling in thousands represents a higher intellectual and moral life value than hundreds of the raw children of nature whom England and France, Russia and Italy oppose to them."

The church turns in no divergent testimony. Doctor Paul Conrad, pastor of the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church in Berlin, tells us frankly, "We feel ourselves to be the bearers of a superior kultur," and he is sure that through the victory of their arms the Germans will bring about a new effiorescence of humanity "through the German nature," which will be a blessing to other nations as well. But why multiply such statements which you can gather from any humblest subject of the empire.

This conviction of superiority, this sense of Germany's special mission in the world is the source from which are derived her fatal notions

of the supermorality of the German state, the necessity for and the justification of militarism. These are the spear-points which she has been directing against America as well as against all other nations. Any state which interferes with the carrying out of her lofty mission in reshaping the world is guilty of aggression. That is why in German eyes this war is a defensive war, and the Kaiser was allowed to declare it as such without ever consulting the Reichstag or, indeed, even the Bundesrath, and that is why the Germans entered upon it almost unconsciously and with enthusiasm, and carried it on with a ruthlessness that would have shamed the Hun.

It is not, therefore, in their minds a state like other states, one in the family of nations. It is the one great state and head of the family. The lesser must help to support it. "The Germans are a race of rulers, a *Herrenvolk*." Others, this means us, must be taught to obey. "Constitutions," as a German has said, "are not for the conquerors, but the conquered." "In a hundred years the American people will be conquered by the victorious German spirit, so that

it will present an enormous German Empire. Whoever does not believe this lacks confidence in the strength of the German spirit." This is not characteristic, to be sure; even the *Alldeutsche Blätter* of September 20, 1902, finds it "rather optimistic." But it is not the raving of a madman. It is a passage from the letter of a New York German, Robert Thiem, who was indulging in dreams of Prussian beatitude. But without this settled delusion of the rights of *Deutschtum* it would have been impossible and it could not now be paralleled by any other nation. It is not, however, one isolated pronouncement. Wilhelm Hübbe-Schleiden wrote in 1903 that "at the present moment the centre of German intellectual activity is in Germany; in the remote future it will be in America. Let them (the Germans in America) show that they mean to maintain *Deutschtum*, and then immigration may be directed to America with impunity."

Nor was the German Government unmindful of these alluring possibilities. We have only recently awakened to the fact that it was supporting *Deutschtum* in America through German-

American leagues, through subsidized propaganda, and through overzealous emissaries. Should "those idiotic Yankees"—the phrase is that of Captain von Papen, their military attaché—not take kindly to the peaceful penetration of *Kultur*, there was always another possibility. That might be serious. Doctor Otto Hötch, professor of history in the War Academy in Berlin, foresaw this, and wrote in August, 1902, that "the most dangerous foe of Germany in this generation will prove to be the United States." But Freiherr von Edelsheim, a lieutenant detailed to work with the General Staff in 1901, could assure them in a study (purely academic, we were told, by Von Bernstorff, though viséed by the General Staff) that "Germany is the only great Power which is in a position to conquer the United States."

Let us admit that all of this is extreme and utterly improbable. But let us recognize that it has its source in a conception of the mission and function of Germany, which leaves no room for the further development or even continuance of American life and ideals as we know them. That is what we mean when we say

this is a war between autocracy and democracy.

That phrase has been accepted by us all, but misunderstood since we did not realize the importance of *Das Deutschtum*. It is fraught with greater meaning than most of us dreamed. We have been accustomed to interpret it somewhat as follows: A great conflict has somehow arisen between the autocracies and the free peoples of the world. We had to fight to prevent a foreign Power from murdering our women and children or barring to us the free paths of the sea. That it is now a show of strength to prove whether a free people rising in its might can maintain such rights against a centralized military autocracy. Serious as this is, the situation that was gradually but irresistibly forcing itself upon us is far more serious and big with consequences. It is not merely a gigantic war in which one shall finally be acclaimed the victor; in which the points at issue shall be settled and the retarded world again move on as before, and in which democracy, if beaten, shall suffer merely the disgrace of having been shown the weaker and the less effective.

We are, to be sure, fighting autocracy, but we are not concerned primarily with the internal organization of states. That the Suabian farmer, the Bavarian school-teacher, or the Saxon mill-hand is willing to accept the rule of Wilhelm II may seem to us regrettable; that the Saxon laborer should have only a parcel of a vote and the Prussian laborer an even smaller piece, and that even entire votes, indeed millions of them, should represent no power worthy of freemen, might call for our pity, especially had they shown any determination to have more and to enjoy the reality and not the poor counterfeit of political freedom; that they should worship the "good old German God" invoked by the Kaiser might interest us as a psychological phenomenon in the history of religions. Yet we were willing that they should continue to accept the rule of Wilhelm, that they should make of freemen's privileges a parody and farce; that they worship Thor under a new name, or even the Grand Llama or their Emperor's great toe. This was none of our business; this was their affair. But when their masters tell us that God has changed

his mind and has decided that henceforth the Prussians and not the peacemakers shall inherit the earth, and when we become convinced that they mean this quite literally, and assume that by virtue of their might they are privileged to appropriate what lands they wish, even our lands, it has become our most serious business. For the Prussian autocracy which we are fighting is not the *inner* organization of their state, it is their *outward* purpose. It would be truer to say that we are not fighting autocracy, we are fighting international absolutism. This is what Prussia represents to-day. It wished to establish itself as the one great, dominant Power. Other states shall have no right to pretend to an equality with her. Small states she may annex, especially if they have any traces of Teutonic ancestry and blood. Others must accept her hegemony and recognize her supremacy. Prussia will rule as she wishes in a world that she is fighting to make her own. In the words of Frymann, "it will be for us alone to judge what we shall need." The wars of 1864 and 1866 and 1870, deliberately provoked, every one of them, were undertaken to make Prussia and the Prussian military system

supreme among all German states. The present war, again deliberately provoked, as we shall see, was undertaken after fifty years of preparation, to make Prussia supreme in Europe and the world.

And the sea, too, shall be his. "Our future lies upon the water," * the Kaiser had announced, and on New Year's Day of the new century he had proclaimed:

"You must in ceaseless labor offer all the powers of body and soul to the building up and development of our troops, and, just as my grandfather labored for his land forces, so, undeterred, I shall carry through to its completion the work of reorganizing my navy in order that it may stand justified at the side of my army, and that through it the German Empire may also be in a position to win outwardly the place which she has not yet attained.

"When both are united I hope to be in a position, firmly trusting in the leadership of God, to carry into effect the saying of Frederick William I: 'If one wishes to decide anything in the world, it cannot be done with the pen unless the pen is supported by the force of the sword.'"†

* "The German Emperor as Shown in His Public Utterances," by Christian Gauss, p. 126.

† From the Kaiser's speech, January 1, 1900, in "The German Emperor as Shown in His Public Utterances," pp. 156–7.

We have considered so far largely the conception of the mission of Germany held by her present masters, and have shown how it was potentially antagonistic. But it is not only in her idea of her mission that Prussia is antagonistic to us, but in her conception of the state, its purpose and morality in the abstract.

Germany, as we have seen, is not a democracy. It is even less so in spirit than in form, for her constitution was deliberately framed by Bismarck to deceive the people and give them the semblance of power but not its substance. It has never been so, and in 1848 was much more nearly democratic in aspiration than it is to-day. In Germany, in Prussia particularly, *Kaiser* and *König*, *Obrigkeit*, *Offizier*, and *Rat* are words to conjure with to a degree undreamed of in liberal lands, and so long as the mass of the people pay to these arrogant dignitaries an exaggerated honor, there is little likelihood that any one of them will surrender his privilege in the interest of equality.

The German type of mind is anachronistic, feudal. While all other modern European nations were liberalizing themselves, Germany

remained in spirit what she had been. In political matters she is the hermit-crab of the nineteenth century. While other governments have been reducing themselves to a common basis of liberal constitutions and democratic spirit which bade fair to bring in a new era of varied but none the less equal nations mingling in a richer cosmopolitanism, the Prussian sulked in his tent or drilled behind the guard-house. He did this with conviction and in accordance with his religion of the state. The German occasionally arrives at the point where he can take his nationality for granted. The Prussian never. He is the provincial of the modern world; he protrudes his nationality into his intercourse with equals and it is difficult for him to be a gentleman. This is far truer now than it was 150 years ago, and if we would understand the causes of the war we must not fail to note which way the tides have been running in Prussia. The modern nations and Germany are farther asunder to-day than they were when our country was founded. Consider her men of letters. Before 1800 Schiller was developing the theory of the *Weltbürger*, the citizen of the

world, and chose as the subjects of his great plays Wilhelm Tell, the Swiss national hero, the Maid of Orleans, the French national heroine, and Mary Stuart, a queen of Scotland. They are all treated with rich sympathy and understanding. Can you imagine Hauptmann or Sudermann doing as much? Of jingo patriotism Goethe, the large-minded, spoke disparagingly as *jene alte Römer Tugend*, that old-fashioned Roman virtue. Lessing said it was a virtue of which he was happy to say he had little. Herder, the only Prussian man of letters of any rank, ran away from Prussian militarism in order to breathe the more liberal air of Catherine the Great's Russia. The spirit which we have come to associate with Germany and of whose meaning we were largely unaware is a development of the last century. Prussia revived after her successful war with France. In that war many Americans sympathized with Germany and felt that the movement toward the consolidation of nationalities had made another inevitable step forward. But in that movement the Franco-Prussian War was tragic. It did not unify Germany as the Italian wars

unified Italy, for Prussia was not attempting, as the world fondly imagined, to bring about the nationalization of Germany. Nothing was farther from her thought. She wished to create and did create Greater Prussia and gave to the new state, instead of liberal institutions, her mediæval-minded monarch and his efficient organization and militarism. The pliant little states of Saxony, Bavaria, and Württemberg, with an honorable tradition of decent living and love of literature and art which Prussia never had, were bound to her victorious chariot-wheels. They hated Prussia yet they became her vassals. She gave them an ideal German only in name. They lost their independence because they had neither the means nor the will to defend it. And they lacked the will since they lacked the tradition of Anglo-Saxon freedom and were used to vassalage. Their necks were calloused to the feudal yoke. They wore it lightly, to be sure, for their submission was voluntary and not servile. It was part of their traditional organization. They accepted Prussia as their suzerain.

Historians do not know exactly how or

where the feudal system began. After the Roman Empire went to pieces in the eclipse of the Dark Ages, when history once again begins to give us faint light, we find a new organization of society, new manners and customs. There is, properly speaking, no state and no nationality. There is a hierarchy of powers and of social and political privileges.

Those who believe, and they are the majority, that it was Germanic in origin, are probably right, and nowhere did this system of dependence take a stronger hold, though there is no record that the Germans excelled in the peculiarly knightly or chivalric virtues. Froissart, the chronicler of late chivalry, is not complimentary. "The Germans are covetous and do nothing, unless money first passes, for they are a very covetous people." Giesebrecht, the German historian, likewise regrets the "Insatiable cupidity" of the robber barons of the Middle Age. One virtue, however, they had, which became proverbial. Over and over we find in their older literature stories of *Deutsche Treue,* fidelity to their overlords, this voluntary and not servile fidelity of which we have spoken. If it is a

virtue it is not a freeman's virtue, and it would seem to linger in the Teutonic temper still, for as a recent writer has remarked, very frequently when Germans came to this country and settled in the West or Middle West they tended to group themselves around a leader to whom they intrusted their affairs and who doubtless on many occasions was allowed to guide and direct them.

With this mediæval temper not yet abolished, it is not unnatural that the feudal and autocratic system should have maintained its hold and should have been adopted in militaristic Prussia. Nowhere are the landed barons, Junkers, so great a power in the state. Their respect for authority and their willingness to have it obtrude itself into all the details of their life is comic to free peoples. The narrow path to the Prussian heaven is lined with *Verboten* signs. Prussian discipline is subservience tempered by enthusiasm. That is the secret of Prussia's military organization. That is why the young Prussian recruit at the command of his enraged officer can and does drink down the filthy contents of a barrack-room cuspidor, and while

raising it to his lips can raise himself to such heights of self-mastery that he will not allow his superior to guess that the order is displeasing. This is militarism, this is discipline, but it is not democracy. Yet it is but one of the abuses of militarism in time of peace which the defense had cited in the Rosa Luxemburg trial, and to which it had found witnesses brave enough to testify.*

It is therefore plain that the spirit of Prussia is not the spirit of America. It is autocratic, militaristic, feudal. It is not for us, it is against us.

* At the request of the government this interesting trial was adjourned against the protests of the defense, early in July, 1914. Some of the most revolting cases are given below.

"In the Queen Augusta Guard Regiment No. 4, Sergeant Waske ordered a grenadier to lie down before a cuspidor, and then called out 'Drink.' The grenadier drank from it quite obediently, which proves that 'servile obedience' (*Kadavergehorsam*) is no idle phrase."

"In the Guard Train Battalion, Non-Commissioned Officer Hoffman ordered exercises which consisted in bending the knees, while the men had to hold a full manure-box in their outstretched arms."

"In the 50th Infantry, Non-Commissioned Officer Poeselt, at inspection of the rooms, ordered the recruits to take cuspidors into their hands, and he then threw the disgusting contents into their faces."

"In the King's Grenadier Regiment No. 7 a recruit was also ordered to drink the contents of a cuspidor."

"In the Württemberg Uhlan Regiment No. 19, Non-Commissioned Officer Krall struck a tubercular Uhlan with his carbine across the helmet so that it broke to pieces, and the Uhlan got a hemorrhage from the mouth and nose. During the extra drill this poor soldier was made to run, and had to lie down in a pool of rain-water. He died before the

The threat which it holds out against any alien government is further reinforced by its conception of the state. This conception is scarcely more than a century old, yet it is absolutely incompatible with any idea of international law or of any brotherhood of nations, and is a development of the originally innocent philosophizing of Fichte and Hegel. The older Prussians had no state in the modern sense, they had only masters. When the sense of nationality began to develop the philosophers created a conception which naturally was fraught with no danger to Prussia's rulers.

We Americans believe that we are the state,

main trial of the N. C. O. came off; the latter escaped with two months' imprisonment."

"In the Prussian Infantry Regiment No. 11, Corporal Schlolaut made a recruit throw himself on the floor and jump up again (*auf- und nieder-werfen*) twenty times in one evening. When this got too difficult for the man, the corporal pressed him down with his knees. Shortly thereafter the tormentor of this recruit pushed him against a clothes closet about twenty-one times, threw a coffee-pot at him, and pulled him across the wash-stand by the throat. When this recruit later on was pushed against the clothes closet he ran away and committed suicide soon thereafter. Corporal Schlolaut escaped with two months' imprisonment."

"In the Prussian Infantry Regiment No. 70 a recruit was maltreated by the 'professional regulars' (*alte Leute*) during the night in such a fashion that, in desperation, he jumped out of a second-story window, and was found in the courtyard unconscious and seriously injured."

". . . . Beating and abuse have been in vogue in the Prussian Army as long as it has existed, nearly 275 years; every effort to eradicate the trouble has so far failed." *Cf.* "German Militarism." (Committee on Public Information.)

that it is "you and me." It has no existence outside of the citizens who compose it and from whom it receives its power and its life. If it is immoral, we who are it are immoral; it is responsible as we are responsible. As its actions are our actions, we therefore wish them to be worthy to conform to a standard as high, indeed, higher, if possible, than our own.

Not so with the Prussian state as developed from Hegel's conception through Treitschke, Nietzsche, and Bernhardi. Their state is not "you and me." It is not the spirit and expression of the sum total of all the citizens. It is something far greater, higher, and more powerful than they. Although, according to Hegel, the individual can demand that the other individual in the state respect him, he cannot expect the state to respect him. He must respect it. It does not exist by virtue of him. He exists by virtue of it. It is his "substance." He cannot pretend to rule it. It rules him. The idea of the state, says Hegel, "should be venerated as a real God upon earth." Furthermore, it is dynamic, with a will of its own. Ordinary standards of morality cannot be applied to it.

Its life is force, and it must continually increase its force. This force is the army. With this army it must realize itself.

This conception of the state as force and the army as the expression of the essence of the state has resulted in a peculiarly military organization. "Other states possess armies," said the French military attaché in 1870, "in Prussia the army possesses the state." The state itself is therefore organized like an army. It has a leader whose orders must be implicitly obeyed and against whose decisions there is no appeal. Effective use of force in strengthening and extending the state is its justification and not considerations of law or humanity. "For me," the Emperor is reported to have said, "humanity ends with the Vosges." Every member of the state must, therefore, be disciplined and efficient. As a soldier he swears allegiance, not to the constitution, but to the Kaiser, his "war lord."

This Prussian state is therefore supreme in Prussia and the world. There is room for nothing above it. There can be no league of nations such as that proposed by our President, by

which it can be fettered or bound. And in this state organized about an army, the army itself is supreme. It is not responsible to any civil power. That, again, is what we mean by militarism.

That this is incompatible with the American ideal will be plain to all. President Wilson in his speech at West Point on June 13, 1916, brought out the contrast strikingly:

"The spirit of militarism is the opposite of the civilian spirit, the citizen spirit. In a country where militarism prevails the military man looks down upon the civilian, regards him as intended for his, the military man's, support . . . and just as long as America is America, that spirit and point of view is impossible with us."

In the last half of the century, as we have seen, the conviction had increased among the Prussians that the greatest state is Prussia, and the greatest civilization the Prussian. It is the mission of the Prussian state to establish its dominance and to spread *Kultur*. Those who refused to recognize its supremacy or accept its *Kultur* were attempting to interfere

with the course of history and deserved no consideration. Prussia was far more than "a geographical expression." It was an implied state of war against the rest of the world. This Prussian ideal it had created and had imposed upon Germany. It took but little persuasion to convince Saxons and South Germans of their superiority, even a superiority which they shared with the Prussians, and they soon accepted the notion; grotesque and fantastic as it seems, it is nevertheless the motive force in recent history. It is the delusion not of a few dreamers, but of millions of the subjects of the Kaiser. This superiority must make itself felt. Not until Deutschland shall *in esse* and *in posse* have erected herself *über Alles* will *Deutschtum* be realized. It is for this reason that Prussia's leaders quite sincerely have been able to speak of the intolerable pressure on her boundaries. There was pressure, but it was not pressure from without. Were Holland or Belgium or France or Switzerland, or even Russia, practising or pondering aggression? Not in the least. The pressure was very real, but it was pressure from within.

When we couple willingness to accept authority, the mediæval and voluntary subservience of which we spoke, with such an ideal and programme we can begin to understand what happened in 1914. For we must not imagine that the Prussian "loves evil for its own bitter sake." To him Prussia and the war that makes for her glory are the highest good on earth. This fanaticism, this mysticism, we are fighting. This is the true root and cause of the great conflict.

This also will explain why they were our potential enemies in 1914. How they became our declared and open enemies will be plain as we trace the earlier stages of the World War, each phase of which will merely bring to the surface one more implication of this theory and programme.

CHAPTER II

THE CAUSE OF THE WORLD WAR

THE ideas which prevailed in Germany on the civilizing mission of that country, on the purpose of states and the function of the army, implied the necessity of war. This necessity was regarded by her leaders not as something dire to be forfended and deferred, but as a consummation which, though it might involve hardships and sacrifice, was none the less devoutly to be wished. War was as natural and desirable for the state as healthy exercise for the individual. It kept the body politic in strength and vigor. According to Hegel, wars are as salutary to the nations as the ocean winds that sweep and stir the waves are to the restless seas.* They prevent stagnation. This idea was repeated by great teachers like Clausewitz and Treitschke, and recently it had been

* *Cf.* J. B. Scott, "A Survey of International Relations Between the United States and Germany, 1914–1917." Pp. xxxv–cxiv contain excellent digests of the more important German theories of the state and its mission.

much more widely spread and reinforced by the application of ideas of biological evolution.* Since the state is force, "der Staat ist Macht," the supreme test of the right of survival among states is their ability to make war successfully and to conquer their competitors. "Success alone justifies war."† To understand German diplomacy and German psychology we must understand that every other state was regarded therefore as a rival and an enemy. States live not on their own inner strength, but on other states. Such conceptions Mr. Vernon Kellogg found to be very generally accepted by the members of the German General Staff, and naturally they assumed that all other countries held the same views but merely lacked the logic to formulate or the sincerity to avow them. Too long a peace was to this highly important and advanced wing of German thought a national calamity, and Germany had been at peace in Europe for over forty years. The time had come for the great catharsis which would restore the

* *Cf.* Vernon Kellogg, "Headquarters Nights," in *Atlantic Monthly*, vol. 120, pp. 145–153.

† General von Moltke, quoted by Jules Cambon in the "French Yellow Book," Document No. 3. Harden has also said: "Our success will absolve us."

state to its pristine health. Nowhere is this view more unreservedly expressed than in Bernhardi's "Germany and the Next War," and nowhere is it more clearly implied than in the military preparations made after 1911.

There was to be sure a small part of the population which understood but did not agree with this doctrine, and a very much larger part which did not understand such metaphysic and biology. According to the report of the French consuls in Germany in 1913 these consisted principally of the workmen, artisans, and peasants (peace-loving by instinct), a few of the nobility engaged in business, the members of the commercial classes whose enterprises depended on credit or were supported by foreign capital. "These classes of people either consciously or instinctively prefer peace to war; but they are only a sort of makeweight in political matters, with limited influence on public opinion, or they are silent social forces, passive and defenseless against the infection of a wave of war-like feeling."*

However, as we have seen, the party in favor

* "French Yellow Book," Document No. 5.

of peace, though it may have been the numerical majority, possessed no actual power. The real possessors of power in Germany were the party of the army and the Pan-Germanists, and as a matter of fact the two are almost co-ordinate. A German of authority, Kurt Eisner, writing in the *Neue Zeit*, April 23, 1915, made the following summary:

"Who wields the decisive influence on the trend of foreign politics in Germany? Who gives the life impulse to economic driving forces? Absolutely none other, for a quarter of a century, than the Pan-Germans. They have acquired a greater influence on the shaping of national policy than even the mightiest combination of interests among the great landowners and capitalists. In the course of years they have put through more measures than all the political parties and all the parliamentary subdivisions of Germany taken together."

They were busily preparing for the "inevitable" conflict which they themselves had made inevitable. Germany had increased her military establishment very decidedly in the years from 1911 to 1914. Her standing army in time of peace following these changes had grown from

544,000 to 815,000. During this period the *Wehrverein* conducted a very active campaign through the press and its efforts were rewarded not only by this increase in the size of the army, but also by the granting of a special war levy in the way of taxes on income and property, which was to net 250,000,000 marks for war purposes. When a nation in time of peace begins to mortgage its capital in the interest of its war establishment, the situation may well be considered threatening.

The explanations offered in the Reichstag were to the effect that recent events in the Balkans had altered the balance of power in Europe. This should be remembered when we consider the reasons why the Central Empires were so eager a year later to attack Serbia. The levy included large sums for modern material as well as a special fund which trebled the war treasury, kept in reserve for the first requirements for the mobilization; raising it from 150,000,000 marks in gold to 300,000,000 in gold plus 150,000,000 in silver. The only people to vote against this bill were the Poles, the Socialists, and the Alsace-Lorrainers.

One of the keenest observers in Berlin before the war was Baron Beyens, the Belgian minister. "We can hardly fail to see," he says, "in the 1913 act a preparation for making war at a not distant date. Its call to arms is as clear as the note of the bugle that summons men to the fight." * This is made increasingly plain from a secret report concerning this action which was prepared at Berlin on March 19, 1913, and which came into the hands of M. Etienne, the French Minister of War. It was printed as an enclosure in the second document of the "French Yellow Book," and contains a striking sentence, which shows how closely the projected war was connected with the idea of fulfilling Germany's high mission. "Neither ridiculous shriekings for revenge by French chauvinists, nor the Englishmen's gnashing of teeth, nor the wild gestures of the Slavs will turn us from our aim of protecting and extending *Deutschtum* all the world over."

But in addition to the desire to prepare for war, this same memorandum makes plain that it was part of the policy of the militarists to

* *Cf.* Beyens, "Germany Before the War," p. 128.

make the mere preparation for war so extensive and burdensome that war itself would be looked upon as a relief. "We must so manage matters that under the heavy weight of powerful armaments, considerable sacrifices, and strained political relations, an outbreak (*Losschlagen*) should be considered as a relief, because after it would come decades of peace and prosperity, as after 1870." This interesting document, certainly symptomatic if not official, also announced that plan of extending German influence through intrigue and the sowing of dissension in foreign countries with which we have since become only too familiar. Its authors likewise contemplated the invasion of Belgium and a very considerable programme of annexations in France and in Russia. Indeed, the war which was being prepared by the military party was in their minds directed against these two Powers who would be the first to be forced to recognize the supremacy of *Deutschtum*. After their decisive defeat, aggressive action would be taken against England, and possibly against America.

But the question is frequently asked: Was

the Kaiser not in favor of peace? The problem will be an interesting one to the future historian of the World War.

From the time of his accession in 1888 he had repeatedly announced himself in favor of peace, and had seemed to have coveted the distinction, so rare in his house, of being regarded as a prince of peace. In spite of his occasional truculence, I believe that in this he was sincere until the year 1911, or possibly a little later. He had, to be sure, done everything in his power to maintain the army at a high point of efficiency, and he preached to it and to his people the doctrine of its invincibility, and of the high mission of the German people. "We are," he had told his people, "the salt of the earth."* He felt that he owed his throne to the army, that his first duty was to it, and he announced to his officers in pride: "These are the gentlemen on whom I can rely."

In October of 1900, he had dedicated a statue to the Roman Emperor Trajan, on the pedestal of which he had engraved Latin lines to the effect that he, *imperator Germanorum*, had

* The Kaiser's speech, Bremen, March 25, 1905.

erected this monument to Trajan, *imperatori Romanorum.* On that occasion he made a speech which proved that he was as conscious as any of his subjects of the great but exceedingly dangerous mission of his country:

"Our German Fatherland, to which I hope it will be granted, through the harmonious co-operation of princes and peoples, of its armies and its citizens, to become in the future as closely united, as powerful, and as authoritative as once the Roman world-empire was, and that, just as in the old times they said: 'Civis romanus sum,' hereafter, at some time in the future, they will say, 'I am a German citizen.' "

But for all this, in spite of his extraordinary outbreak on the occasion of the departure of the German troops for China, and his seeming aggressiveness at Tangiers and Agadir, he wanted peace in the sense that he preferred peace to war. The peace which he desired was, however, a German peace, and he did not understand that it involved "either mutual concessions or a balance of armaments." * He wished Germany to be feared as well as re-

* "French Yellow Book," Document No. 7, Enclosure I.

spected and his whole world policy was based on this desire. Yet until 1911, possibly until a little later, he had kept his own army in leash. After this date a change took place in his own policy as well as in that of the military party. If they did not on all points coincide, it will be plain in the next chapter that the policies were not divergent and that, whatever his apologists may say, the Kaiser himself is personally very largely responsible for the outbreak of the World War. The generation which had grown up under the tutelage of teachers like Treitschke was now occupying most of the positions of power in the empire. Pan-Germanism, with its programme, was a natural outgrowth. This programme of aggressive militarism and annexations had been developing its strength until it would have been almost impossible for the Kaiser, even had he wished to do so, to stem the tide. It was strongest in the party to which he looked for support, and he was out of sympathy with the Socialists, its enemies.

The settlement of the Morocco question in 1911 marks the final turn of German policy. It was then that the die was cast. That settle-

ment was looked upon by the majority of Germans, especially by the army, as a diplomatic defeat and a blow to German prestige. Germany, to be sure, had succeeded in establishing the principle that when others of the great Powers increased their dominions she, by that mere fact, was entitled to compensation and she had received such compensation in the French Congo. But the Germans, unable to forget their victory of 1870, expected from France a much greater humility. She should have spoken to the Imperial German Government with head bowed and hat in hand, instead of presenting herself as a nation with rights that deserved to be respected.

In addition to the regular mobilization of the German Army there is a preliminary measure which consists in warning men and officers of reserve to make the necessary preparations and to hold themselves ready for war. It is a general call to attention. We learn from the French ambassador at Berlin:

"This warning was given in 1911 during the negotiations which I was carrying on with regard to Morocco.

"Now it has been given again about ten days

ago—that is to say, at the moment of the Austro-Albanian tension. I know that this is so, and I have it from several different sources, notably from officers of the reserve who have told it to their friends in the strictest confidence."*

Plainly the army was growing restive and in need of exercise. Even a considerable wing of the Socialists urged war, as is plain from the statement by Harden, cited in the last chapter. The Emperor was running the risk of being considered more moderate than the Socialists. German aspirations and desire for prestige suffered a further check after the Balkan Wars in 1912–13, through which Turkey, Germany's ally, had been forced to surrender most of her territory in Europe; and especially after the second Balkan War, when Greece, Serbia, Roumania, and Montenegro succeeded in defeating Bulgaria, her remaining friend along the coveted corridor to the East.

Indeed, the Balkan States were beginning to act like independent entities, and seemed to block the possibility of further Austro-German expansion.

* *Cf.* "French Yellow Book," No. 3.

These outward happenings were serious, to be sure, but to the Kaiser one thing which happened at home was probably even more serious. After the Zabern incident a great outcry was raised by the element in favor of civilian control of the government, and especially by the Socialists. So strong was the movement that a vote of censure was passed against the Chancellor von Bethmann-Hollweg in the Reichstag. This, to be sure, involved no consequences, since according to the German autocratic system the chancellor is not responsible to the Reichstag but to the Emperor alone. But at the end of the session, on May 20, 1914, the Socialists had refused to rise and cheer for the Emperor, as had always been done on such occasions. The Emperor was still smarting under this slight when negotiations with Austria concerning the chastisement of Serbia began.

The most striking direct evidence of the Kaiser's change of front was given on November 6, 1913. It evidently strengthened an impression which had already been forcing itself upon Jules Cambon, the French ambassador at

Berlin, for under date of November 22 of that year he wrote as follows:

"BERLIN, November 22, 1913.

"I have received from an absolutely reliable source an account of a conversation which took place a fortnight ago between the Emperor and the King of the Belgians, in the presence of the Chief of the General Staff—General von Moltke. This conversation, it appears, has made a profound impression on King Albert. I am in no way surprised at the impression he gathered, which corresponds with what I have myself felt for some time. Enmity against us is increasing, and the Emperor has ceased to be the friend of peace." *

There can be no question of the reliability of M. Cambon's information, for the report of this conversation was given him by Baron Beyens, the Belgian minister at Berlin, who doubtless discussed the matter with King Albert himself. Baron Beyens says:

"On this occasion the Emperor told King Albert that he looked upon war with France as 'inevitable and close at hand.' What reason did he give for this pessimistic statement, which impressed his royal visitor all the more strongly

* "French Yellow Book," No. 6.

since the belief in the peaceful sentiments of the Emperor had not yet been shaken in Belgium? He pointed out that France herself wanted war, and that she was arming rapidly with that end in view, as was proved by the vote on the law enacting a three years' term of military service. At the same time he declared that he felt certain of victory. The Belgian monarch, who was better informed as to the real inclinations of the French Government and people, tried in vain to enlighten him, and to dispel from his mind the false picture that he drew from the language of a handful of fanatical patriots, the picture of a France thirsting for war.

"On the 6th of November General von Moltke, chief of the general staff, after a dinner to which the Emperor, in honor of his guest, had invited the leading officials present in Berlin, had a conversation with King Albert. He expressed himself in the same terms as his sovereign on the subject of war with France, asserted that it was bound to come soon, and insisted still more emphatically on the certain prospect of success, in view of the enthusiasm with which the whole German nation would gird up its loins to beat back the traditional foe. General von Moltke used the same blustering language that evening to the Belgian military attaché, who sat next to him at table. I have been told that later in the evening he showed a similar lack of reserve toward other military attachés in whom he was pleased to confide, or whom he wished to impress.

"The real object of these confidential outbursts is not hard to discover. They were an invitation to our country, face to face with the danger that threatened western Europe, to throw herself into the arms of the stronger, arms ready to open, to clasp Belgium—yes, and to crush her. When we think of the ultimatum issued to Belgium on the following 2d of August, we realize to what an act of servility and cowardice William II, through this Potsdam interview, would fain have driven King Albert."*

The fact that Von Moltke, chief of the General Staff, should have taken the pains to repeat the same views leads us to conclude that he and his imperial master had decided to "feel out" King Albert, and if possible, by convincing him of Germany's strength, induce him to step aside when the time should come for the invasion of Belgium. It is reasonable to believe that William II was already looking forward to this "necessity," and that he had already agreed with his chief of staff upon the terms under which was to be issued the ultimatum which shocked the neutral world.

The only question really open to historians is whether William II honestly believed that France was threatening him with war. In the

* *Cf.* Beyens, "Germany Before the War," pp. 36–38.

following year, he, with his advisers, was, as we shall see from German testimony, to decide that it would be to Germany's advantage to force the issue. He had reached an understanding with the army, and up to this time the power of the Kaiser had been the only effective check on the plans of the militarists and Pan-Germans. The conflict they had long desired was now bound to come. We have no evidence to show that the Kaiser sympathized with or encouraged their dreams of annexations. It is difficult to believe, however, after the statements of his chancellors and the results of the treaty of Brest-Litovsk that he disapproved of them. What these designs were we know from President Wilson's statement:

"Their plan was to throw a broad belt of German military power and political control across the very centre of Europe and beyond the Mediterranean, into the heart of Asia; and Austria-Hungary was to be as much their tool and pawn as Serbia or Bulgaria or Turkey or the ponderous states of the East. Austria-Hungary, indeed, was to become part of the Central German Empire, absorbed and dominated by the same forces and influences that had originally cemented the German States themselves. The dream had its heart at Ber-

lin. It could have had a heart nowhere else. It rejected the idea of solidarity of race entirely. The choice of peoples played no part in it at all. It contemplated binding together racial and political units which could be kept together only by force—Czechs, Magyars, Croats, Serbs, Roumanians, Turks, Armenians—the proud states of Bohemia and Hungary, the stout little commonwealths of the Balkans, the indomitable Turks, the subtile peoples of the East. These peoples did not wish to be united. They ardently desired to direct their own affairs, would be satisfied only by the presence or the constant threat of armed men. They would live under a common power only by sheer compulsion and await the day of revolution. But the German military statesmen had reckoned with all that and were ready to deal with it in their own way."*

Pan-Germans and militarists felt that the first step should and must be directed against France. How they intended to motivate such action is plain from the signed statement made for the Committee on Public Information by David Starr Jordan:

"In the summer of 1913 I learned of a meeting of the *Friedensfreunde* to be held in Nuremberg in July. I attended the meeting and be-

* Address of June 14, 1917.

came acquainted with a number of leading Democrats, and with a good many others interested in peace, though not on a democratic basis. I was invited to come back to speak in the German cities, and I found time in December . . . to give lectures in Frankfurt, Wiesbaden, Mannheim, Stuttgart, and Munich. Through my friends I learned a good deal of the plans of the Pan Germanists and especially of the German General Staff.

"In brief, they hoped to bring on war in 1914. Presumably, at that time, through disturbances to be created in Alsace-Lorraine. They were then proposing to take Belgium and Holland—Holland for the sake of making Antwerp the center for the coming attack upon England. They wished especially to take the two departments of Nord and Pas-de-Calais from France. They proposed to make of Boulogne the great seaport of Germany, surrounding its broad, flat bay with breakwaters, doing all this before England would enter the war, and removing the German fleet to Boulogne. They had a new German name for Boulogne, but I do not find it in my notes and do not recollect it. They were also to take Paris and exact an indemnity that would pay the expenses of the war; 25,000,000 marks was the figure I heard mentioned. After this they were to treat France with great lenience, relieving her of all necessity for maintaining an army and navy and defending her from her great arch-enemy, Great Britain. It was thought

that France being wholly degenerate would not resist, and she could then devote herself to commerce and to the continuing of loans of money to finance German industry. . . .

"I suppose that the Zabern incident and the arrest of 'Oncle Hansi' (Jean Jacques Waltz) were moves in the direction of inciting trouble in Alsace, getting a protest from France to be followed by a sudden ultimatum. The death of the Archduke (Francis Ferdinand, June 28, 1914), whether planned in Budapesth or not, served to make the way to war easier, by beginning it in the southeast." *

It is probable that William II, still smarting under the slight offered by the Socialists on May 20, 1914, and still chagrined over the outcome of the Morocco question and the Balkan Wars, was as anxious to show his power and re-establish his credit with all parties as he was to humiliate Serbia. It will be plain, moreover, that before Austria issued the ultimatum to Serbia he had decided to risk if not to provoke war with Russia and with France.

* *Cf.* "The Study of the Great War," by Samuel B. Harding, p. 27.

CHAPTER III

THE OCCASION OF THE WORLD WAR

IN 1914 Europe was in a state of tension which had lasted six years, and which was beginning "to try the nerves" of the great Powers. More than anything else the movement in the Balkans was responsible for this general restlessness. The situation, especially in view of the increase of armaments in Germany, of which we have already spoken, and the French reply, by increasing the period of military service from two years to three, and the general aggressiveness of Berlin, made war seem imminent. The Balkan Peninsula had become the storm-centre, for, as we have seen, the developments there were threatening to overturn the unfortunate system of balance of power on which European politics had so long rested. Yet in the early stages of the present war we were inclined to pay too much attention to what was happening in the Balkans primarily, and

have therefore seen the developments that led to the conflict somewhat out of focus.

In July, 1914, the world was trying to look into the future through the passes of the Balkans. Events there which in ordinary times would have been of minor consequence loomed large and portentous. When a Bosnian, Gabrilo Princep, who was an Austrian subject, assassinated the Austrian crown prince, Francis Ferdinand, and his wife, and war followed, it was natural under the circumstances and under the stress of the first shock to attribute the war to Princep's crime. Yet the assassination of the archduke was no more the cause of the war in any philosophical sense than the fly on the telescope is the cause of the great spot on the sun. It was not the cause of the war, it was merely the occasion. The causes lay deeper as we have already seen. The war would have come in any case; Princep's crime merely made it certain that it must come in 1914. To understand the reasons for this we must take a rapid glance at the situation in the Balkans.

In 1908 Austria-Hungary had annexed Bos-

nia and Herzegovina, violating by this act Article XXV of the Congress of Berlin. Russia, which was inclined to assume the attitude of protector to the Slav states, and whose interests under the Congress of Berlin had been disregarded, had at that time not yet recovered from the Russo-Japanese War, 1904–5, and was forced to acquiesce when the Kaiser boldly proclaimed that he "took his stand in shining armor by the side of his ally." Little Serbia was, therefore, forced to submit, though the discontent at the action of Austria-Hungary was about as keen in the annexed provinces as it was in the kingdom of Serbia itself. This tension, which was the result of a violation of the principle of national self-determination, was bound to continue and to increase. France and England, who had already come to an *entente cordiale* after the settlement of the Egyptian question, refused to go to war over this increase of Austro-Hungarian influence. In 1911 came the second Morocco crisis, which, as we have seen, had particularly embittered Germany and aroused particular resentment in the German military party. But the great surprise

of this whole period occurred when Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Montenegro formed a secret league to expel Turkey from Europe and liberate their fellow Christians from Turkish misrule. They declared war on Turkey in October, 1912, and the great Powers, because of their own divergent and selfish aims, and the fact that they were taken unawares, failed to restrain the new alliance. Contrary to expectations, the Balkan allies met with full success, and Turkey was forced to surrender most of her territory in Europe, by the Treaty of London, May 30, 1913. The Central Empires, Germany and Austria, had of course expected that their ally, Turkey, would emerge victorious, or at least make a better showing.

Only a month later a new war broke out, when Bulgaria attacked her recent allies as a result of disputes over a division of conquered territory. Roumania joined Serbia, Greece, and Montenegro, and Bulgaria was defeated. Most of the conquered territory was therefore given to Greece, Serbia, and Montenegro, though, because of Austrian, German, and Italian objection, Serbia was denied any seaport

on the Adriatic. In both these wars Austria and Germany had failed to diagnose the situation and had supported the losing side, first Turkey and then Bulgaria. The loss of German prestige was the more serious, as the Turkish Army had been trained and equipped by Germans. The Balkans were therefore a sore point, and the increase in Serbia's power was to the Central Empires the more distressing, since it helped to block the way to the East, and made the dream of Middle Europe more difficult of realization. Serbia, furthermore, was beginning an agitation for a greater Serbia which was to include also the Serbs of the provinces so recently annexed to Austria-Hungary. England had acquired Egypt, and France Morocco. Germany and Austria-Hungary, hungry for increased power and territory, were far from satisfied.

Such was the situation when the Archduke Francis Ferdinand and his wife were shot down in the streets of the capital of Bosnia. Francis Ferdinand had given promise of becoming an able ruler of the Dual Monarchy. It is possible that had he arrived at power, he would

have given at least some rights to the oppressed nationalities in the conglomerate Hapsburg state. There is not the slightest probability, however, that he would have looked with favor on the desire of the Serbs to be united in a kingdom of their own.

His entry into Serajevo was particularly ill-timed, for to expect that at the time of the great Serbian national holiday the Bosnian Serbs, who had been forcibly annexed to the dominions of his house six years before, would deck their capital with flags and receive him with honor and gratitude was folly. The Serbian Government had warned Austria of the risk and danger. With splendid, if somewhat insolent, courage he had come, he had seen, he had died with his consort. But to imagine that the death of this Austrian archduke, whose name was scarcely known in Brussels, was the reason why Prussian armies four weeks later invaded Belgium is to give up the search for historical causes. Is it for his sake, to keep this proud and lonely ghost company, that over 4,000,000 men have gone to their graves? Is it because of him in any sense that over 1,000,000 Americans have crossed the

seas and now in desperate combat face the Germans on the flats of Flanders, the plains of Picardy, and the hills of the Woëvre and of the Vosges? To believe this is to deny that the wills and desires of men or nations play any part on this world's stage. It would be sacrilegious to every ideal of liberty and justice to entertain the thought that this is all, and that for this only any single citizen has been called from his peaceful pursuits and sent from his shop or his field to fight, perchance to die, in an unknown land. This act was done by those opposed to Germany; and so, to say this was "the challenge" would suggest that the opponents of Germany were the more ready and anxious for the duel. The true cause of the war is much simpler than this. The true cause of the war is the fact that the powers in Germany which can make war desired ardently to do so, and therefore seized upon this assassination, as a German Socialist expressed it, as a "gift from heaven." Their desire for war is evident from the previous chapters. It is now possible to show the stages by which they transferred this desire into action.

Let us turn for a moment to the protagonists in this great drama.

The archduke had been the friend of Kaiser William II. How was the latter to receive the news? Let us take the account of a careful if interested witness, Baron Beyens, the Belgian minister at Berlin:

"All eyes were turned toward Kiel, where the fatal news reached William II. while he was taking part in a yacht race on board his own clipper. He turned pale, and was heard to murmur: 'So my work of the past twenty-five years will have to be started all over again!' Enigmatic words, which may be interpreted in various ways! To the British ambassador, who was also at Kiel, with the British squadron returning from the Baltic, he unburdened himself in more explicit fashion: '*Es ist ein Verbrechen gegen das Deutschtum.*' By this he probably meant that Germany, feeling her own interests assailed by the Serajevo crime, would make common cause with Austria to exact a full retribution. With more self-control than usual, however, he abstained from all further public utterances on the subject." *

"It is a crime against *Deutschtum.*" We have already seen that the Emperor was con-

* "Germany Before the War," p. 276.

vinced that war with France was inevitable, and the statement of Mr. Jordan shows that a large party in Germany desired such a war in the interest of *Deutschtum*, and regardless of the Balkans. This was the view of the General Staff, and the Kaiser, as we saw, was, on essentials at least, in accord with General von Moltke. Was the time favorable for the "inevitable" stroke?

Russia was in no condition to make war. Austria and Germany were convinced of this. It was the expressed opinion of the Austrian ambassador at Berlin and the German ambassador at Vienna. France was in the hands of unpatriotic radicals, and the Minister of War had confessed that the army was poorly supplied. Reports from London seemed to prove that England would not enter the conflict, and she seemed, furthermore, on the verge of civil war over the Irish question. So favorable a juncture of circumstances could hardly occur again. Either Russia and France would have to stand aside in humiliation while Germany and Austria forced their way to the east through Serbia and realized Middle Europe or, if they

refused to accept such humiliation and offered resistance, the score could now very advantageously be settled and Germany's two European rivals be rendered harmless for the future.

Americans have often insisted on the German inability to understand the psychology of other peoples. Let us not fall into the same error and fail to understand the psychology of the Germans. They are a different people, nationalistic and imperialistic, who believe in the superiority of *Deutschtum*. Their young men have not been trained to honor and respect a Washington or a Lincoln, who would sacrifice all and even themselves in the interest of truth, of justice, of humanity. Their national heroes, the men they are taught to revere, were men of force, who succeeded through deceit. Bismarck, who boasted of having brought on a successful war through suppression of the truth, is their Lincoln. Frederick the Great wrote from the camp at Mollwitz to his minister, de Podervils: "If there is anything to be gained by it, we will be honest; if deception is necessary, let us be cheats."* Frederick the

* Letter dated May 12, 1741. *Cf.* also J. B. Scott, "A Survey," pp. xxii *et seq.*

Great is their Washington. Professor Adolf Lasson, one of their greatest and most honored teachers of international law, tells them: "The state breaking a treaty enters into a state of war; it acts unwisely whenever it challenges a decision through the force of arms, unless it is sure of its superior force. If it has this force, then it may do whatever it pleases; for between states the right of the strong alone prevails. . . . The weaker is, in spite of any and all treaties, the prey of the stronger, whenever the latter wills to and can prey upon it." Instead, therefore, of being shocked to find that a great state like Germany should deliberately stoop to violence and fraud, we should rather expect it, and instead of granting ready belief to her excuses we must weigh them with care. In the process of doing so we shall arrive at far different conceptions of the origin of the war than those which prevailed in the early period of our neutrality, and we shall perhaps be forced to agree with Doctor Dernberg (for a time the Kaiser's personal agent in America) and Doctor Delbrück when, in their petition printed in *Deutsche Politik* for September 28, 1917, they proclaim in sorrow:

"Our lies are coarse and improbable, our ambiguity is pitiful simplicity, and our intrigues are without salt and without grace."

Let us consider the problem as it presented itself to the Kaiser and his staff. The time had come when Germany could secure cheaply and with promising chances of success either a great diplomatic triumph or a swift military victory which would establish her pre-eminence in Europe. Her own army had recently been increased to a point beyond which she could hardly hope to go. Her enemies, Russia and France, were in poor case. There could, therefore, be no question of the issue if the system of alliance which she had built up could be forced to move. Here was a chance for a war which Austria ardently desired, and it was rather doubtful whether she could be made to co-operate fully in any future action directed merely or primarily against France. If Italy, which did not look with favor on Serbia's desire to reach the Adriatic, would co-operate, and especially if England, which wanted peace, would stand aside, the great stakes would be swiftly won. Italy was a partner

with Austria and Germany in the Triple Alliance. She was bound to co-operate only in a defensive war, and one to which England was not a party (for in that case her coasts would be open to the British fleet).

The one element at home whose enthusiasm it was desirable to enlist was the Social-Democratic party. This could be done if the war, which was to be provoked, could be made to appear defensive in character. The aim of her diplomatic manœuvres was, therefore, to provoke a war in which—

1. Italy would join her.
2. England would remain neutral,
3. The Social-Democrats would be with the government.

How could this end be accomplished?

It would be ridiculous for Austria to make a war on little Serbia, and claim that it was defensive. It could be accomplished, however, if Russia could be made the scapegoat and made to appear the aggressor. The menace of czarism would have a powerful effect upon the masses in Germany. Therefore, plans must be laid to locate the blame in Saint Petersburg.

One of two things would therefore be certain. Austria could safely be allowed to make war on Serbia and reduce her to the position of a vassal state. The frontier of the Central Empires could then start moving southward through the Balkans toward the east, like a creeping barrage, and Middle Europe would be on the way to realization. This in itself would be a large step toward achieving the supremacy of *Deutschtum*, and would seriously impair the power and prestige of Russia and France. The push must now be made, and if Russia, as seemed highly probable, became involved, the blame must be cast upon her. Austria and Germany had the great advantage in the subsequent diplomatic contest of knowing exactly their objectives, and the possibilities were very probably rehearsed, and the moves in the diplomatic game played out in advance.

Accordingly, to meet the situation Austria would have to issue an ultimatum in terms so harsh that Serbia could not possibly accept it. A time limit must be set, so short that there would be no possibility that the ambassadors of the Powers, who were away on their summer

vacations, could return and act in effective concert. If any extension of this time limit were asked for it must be refused, as it was refused when Sazanoff asked for it.* If any attempt were made to refer the matter to the Hague Tribunal it must be rejected. Such a proposal was, in fact, made by Serbia with her acceptance of most of the conditions of the Austrian ultimatum.† Again, on July 29, the Czar himself, in a personal telegram to the Kaiser, proposed that the Austro-Serbian problem be given over to the Hague Tribunal. This was awkward, indeed, for how could one make the Czar the aggressor after this? Any reference to this telegram had, therefore, to be omitted from the memorial submitted to the Reichstag by Von Bethmann-Hollweg.

Any attempt of the disinterested Powers to mediate must be rejected. England made this proposal, Italy and France willingly acceded, but when Germany was asked to unite with them in mediation she refused.‡

* "British Blue Book," No. 13, and "Russian Orange Book," No. 4.

† Reply of Serbian Government to the Austro-Hungarian note. "Serbian Blue Book," No. 39.

‡ "British Blue Book," Nos. 36 and 84; "German White Book," No. 15.

If Germany were called upon to formulate some counter-proposal she must decline to do so, and she did decline when Earl Grey, after Germany's refusal to accept the mediation of the four Powers, asked that she suggest any other plan.*

Germany would be willing only to propose direct negotiations between Russia and Austria. Previous understanding had very probably been reached between Austria and Germany that Austria would refuse to yield.† When later it appeared that England would stand by France and Russia, and that Italy would not join the Triple Alliance, Austria hesitated, and when the Russian foreign minister made his second proposal, on July 31, to allow the great Powers to examine the Serbian satisfactions, Austria seemed inclined to yield, but by that time the matter was already far beyond her control, and the German council of war, held in Potsdam on the evening of July 29,

* "British Blue Book," No. 84.

† England, France, and Russia agreed to accept any mediation proposals made by Germany and Austria which would preserve peace. *Cf.* "British Blue Book," Nos. 78, 84, and 111; "French Yellow Book," No. 86; "Russian Orange Book," No. 64.

had already decided to make war on France and Russia. The German Government was waiting now only for a pretext.

To carry out such a plan, a diplomatic campaign of indirection would certainly be necessary. It is now possible to show, from German testimony, that the German Government had recourse to such indirection throughout the course of its negotiations.

While the world was still under the shock of the suddenness under which the catastrophe came, historians sought eagerly for an explanation in the various white, yellow, and blue papers, published by the different governments, and especially in the White Paper published by Germany, which curiously enough had been prepared and was ready for issue before the war was really under way, on August 3. If we would correctly fix the responsibility for the war, however, we must look to other sources.

From the first Germany was to pretend that she knew nothing about the Austrian ultimatum. Her ambassadors were all instructed to make this statement, and it was repeated by Lichnowsky at London, who received a special

telegram from the government; by Schoen in Paris, and by Von Jagow, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs himself, at Berlin. So frequently was this reiterated that so careful a historian as Mr. Stowell was willing to accept the German statement, in spite of its inherent improbability, for according to the terms of the Triple Alliance, every member is bound to lay before its allies any diplomatic matters which may involve the alliance. Indeed, so well was this understood that in 1913, when Austria had been tempted to take the same action, she laid her proposals for aggressive action against Serbia before both Italy and Germany. If Austria and Germany did not lay them before Italy in 1914 it was only because they had been convinced by Italy's reply in 1913 that she would never admit that such action against Serbia could possibly be defensive in character or bind her to co-operation. If, however, Austria and Germany succeeded in making Russia appear as the aggressor, they hoped possibly to enlist Italian co-operation. It should have struck historians as little short of amazing that two of the partners in the Triple Alliance could go so far

without consulting the third, and that in the Austrian and German official papers Italy should scarcely be mentioned. The reason for this curious and significant omission was made plain by the statement of Signor Giolitti, the former Italian premier, in the Italian Chamber of Deputies, on December 5, 1914. The Marquis of San Giuliano referred to was Minister for Foreign Affairs in Signor Giolitti's cabinet.

"I feel it my duty to recall a precedent showing how correct was the interpretation of the alliance by the Government when the conflict began. During the Balkan War, on August 9, 1913, being absent from Rome, I received the following telegram from the late Marquis di San Giuliano: 'Austria has communicated to us and Germany that it has been the intention to act against Serbia, defining such action as defensive and hoping for an application of a *casus fœderis* by the Triple Alliance, which I consider inapplicable. I am trying to agree with Germany concerning efforts to present Austrian action, but it may be necessary to say clearly that we do not consider such eventful action as defensive, and, therefore, do not think that there exists a *casus fœderis*. Please send a telegram saying whether you approve.'

"I answered Marquis di San Giuliano thus: 'If Austria goes against Serbia, a *casus fœderis*

evidently does not exist. It is an action she accomplished on her own account. It is not defensive, because nobody thinks of attacking her. It is necessary to declare this to Austria in the most formal manner, hoping that Germany will act to dissuade Austria from a very dangerous adventure.'

"This was done, and our interpretation of the treaty was accepted by our allies, our friendly relations not being in the least disturbed. Thus the declaration of neutrality, made at the beginning of this conflict, is according to the spirit and letter of the treaties. I recall this incident, wishing to demonstrate the complete loyalty of Italy before the eyes of Europe." *

If this collusion between the Austrian and German cabinets can be proved, the insincerity of their entire procedure is evident, and it is no longer necessary to consider their attempted justifications which were issued merely in the attempt to hoodwink their allies and a part of their own population.

Let us see what actually happened. We know from Ambassador Gerard, who was present at Kiel, that the Emperor left hurriedly for Berlin on June 28. Very shortly after he sent

* *Cf.* Stowell, "The Diplomacy of the War of 1914," pp. 470–1.

telegrams to some of his ambassadors, certainly to Baron von Wangenheim, at Constantinople, and in all probability to Tschirschky at Vienna, calling them to a conference at Potsdam on July 5. In addition there were present Moltke, then chief of staff, Admiral von Tirpitz, and some of the great bankers, railroad directors, and captains of industry, all of whose services would have to be called upon in case of war. What happened we know from the words of Henry Morgenthau, formerly United States ambassador to Turkey:

"Wangenheim now told me that the Kaiser solemnly put the question to each man in turn: Was he ready for war? All replied 'Yes' except the financiers. They said that they must have two weeks to sell their foreign securities and to make loans.

"In telling me about this conference Wangenheim, of course, admitted that Germany had precipitated the war. I think that he was rather proud of the whole performance; proud that Germany had gone about the matter in so methodical and farseeing a way; especially proud that he himself had been invited to participate in so momentous a gathering. The several blue, red, and yellow books which flooded Europe the few months following the outbreak,

and the hundreds of documents which were issued by German propaganda attempting to establish Germany's innocence, never made any impression on me. For my conclusions as to the responsibility are not based on suspicions or belief or the study of circumstantial data. I do not have to reason or argue about the matter. I know." *

It is probable that Helfferich and Krupp von Bohlen were among those present, also that Von Jagow, who was so loud in his protestations of ignorance, though probably not present, knew all that had happened. Helfferich and Krupp von Bohlen certainly did. This we have learned only recently from Doctor Mühlon, a man formerly of the highest social and business standing in Germany, who up to the outbreak of the war was a director in Krupp's. The dishonesty of the German procedure, and the thorough unreliability of the German leaders and the unrighteousness of

* "Ambassador Morgenthau's Story," *World's Work*, June, 1918, pp. 170–1. Wangenheim told his friend, the Italian ambassador, Signor Garroni, on his return to his post, July 15, 1914, that the conference he had attended had decided on a European war. When Signor Garroni asked what the provocation was to be, Wangenheim replied that Austria was to make demands on Serbia that would surely lead to war. Signor Garroni reported this officially to his government. (*Cf.* New York *Nation*, September 6, 1917.) Signor Garroni also informed Mr. Einstein, a member of our legation, who recorded it in his diary at the time. (*Cf.* London *Times*, August 4, 1917.)

their course, impressed him so strongly that he resigned his position with Krupp's, and refused for a long time to take any active part in what Germany was doing, except such as might tend toward reconciliation and the establishment of peace. It was he who before Roumania's entrance into the war was chosen by Von Bethmann-Hollweg to conduct the negotiations with that country, which were to bring food-supplies into Germany. After the declaration of unrestrained submarine warfare he became so completely out of sympathy with the German cause that he left for Switzerland, from which country, of his own accord, he issued the following statement:

"In the middle of July, 1914, I had, as I frequently had, a conversation with Dr. Helfferich, then director of the Deutsche Bank in Berlin, and now Vice-Chancellor. The Deutsche Bank had adopted a negative attitude toward certain large transactions in Bulgaria and Turkey, in which the firm of Krupp, for business reasons—delivery of material—had a lively interest. As one of the reasons to justify the attitude of the Deutsche Bank, Dr. Helfferich gave me among others the following reason:—

" 'The political situation has become very menacing. The Deutsche Bank must in any

case wait before entering into any further engagements abroad. The Austrians have just been with the Kaiser. In a week's time Vienna will send a very severe ultimatum to Serbia, with a very short interval for the answer. The ultimatum will contain demands: such as punishment of a number of officers, dissolution of political associations, criminal investigations in Serbia by Austrian officials, and, in fact, a whole series of definite satisfactions will be demanded at once; otherwise Austria-Hungary will declare war on Serbia.'

"Dr. Helfferich added that the Kaiser had expressed his decided approval of this procedure on the part of Austria-Hungary. He had said that he regarded a conflict with Serbia as an internal affair between these two countries, in which he would permit no other state to interfere. If Russia mobilized, he would mobilize also. But in this case mobilization meant immediate war. This time there would be no hesitation. Helfferich said that the Austrians were extremely well satisfied at this determined attitude on the part of the Kaiser.

"When I thereupon said to Dr. Helfferich that this uncanny communication converted my fears of a world-war, which were already strong, into absolute certainty, he replied that it certainly looked like that. But perhaps France and Russia would reconsider the matter. In any case the Serbs deserved a lesson which they would remember. This was the first intimation that I had received about the Kaiser's discus-

sions with our Allies. I knew Dr. Helfferich's particularly intimate relations with the personages who were sure to be initiated, and I knew that this communication was trustworthy.

"After my return from Berlin I informed Herr Krupp von Bohlen and Halbach, one of whose directors I then was at Essen. Helfferich had, furthermore, explicitly authorized me to do so. At that time the intention was to make him a director of Krupp's. Von Bohlen seemed disturbed that Dr. Helfferich was in possession of such information, and he made an unfavorable remark about the members of the Government who could not keep their mouth shut. He then told me the following. He said that he had himself been with the Kaiser in the last few days. The Kaiser had spoken to him also of his conversation with the Austrians, and of its result; but he had described the matter as so secret that he (Krupp) would not even have dared to inform his own directors. As, however, I already knew, he could tell me that Helfferich's statements were accurate. Indeed, Helfferich seemed to know more details than he did. He said that the situation was really very serious. The Kaiser had told him that he would declare war immediately if Russia mobilized, and that this time people would see that he did not turn about. The Kaiser's repeated insistence that this time nobody would be able to accuse him of indecision had, he said, been almost comic in its effect. It was exactly on the day that

Helfferich had indicated to me, that the ultimatum of Serbia appeared. I was at this time in Berlin, and I indicated to Helfferich that I found the tone and the contents of the ultimatum really monstrous. Dr. Helfferich replied that this appeared so only in the German translation, that he had had under his eyes the ultimatum in French and that one could not consider it as at all exaggerated. On this occasion Helfferich also told me that the Emperor had undertaken his trip to the north only to save appearances, that he had not given it its usual extension, but that he had always remained sufficiently near, so that he could be reached and so that permanent communication could be maintained with him. We would now have to see what would happen. It was to be hoped that the Austrians, who did not expect an acceptance of the ultimatum, would act quickly, before the other powers had had the time to discuss it. The Deutsche Bank had already taken precautions to meet all eventualities. It had ceased to return to circulation the gold which came in. They were believed to do it in a manner altogether discreet, and this brought in every day considerable sums.

"Immediately after the ultimatum of Vienna to Serbia, the German Government made declarations saying that Austria-Hungary had acted by itself unknown to Germany. When we try to reconcile these declarations with the facts given above, there is only one explanation,—that

the Emperor had already engaged himself without allowing his Government to collaborate, and that at the time of the interview with the Austrians they had renounced on the German side to agree upon the text of the ultimatum, for I have already shown that the contents of the ultimatum was quite accurately known in Germany.

"Mr. Krupp von Bohlen, with whom I spoke upon these lying declarations at least with regard to their effect, showed himself likewise but little edified because Germany in an affair as serious ought not to have given full power to a state like Austria-Hungary. . . . In short, Mr. von Bohlen considered the German affirmation of ignorance as a fault against the rudiments of diplomacy, and he told me that he would speak in this regard to Mr. von Jagow, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who was one of his intimate friends.

"As a result of this interview Mr. von Bohlen told me that Mr. von Jagow had affirmed to him again that he had not collaborated on the text of the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum and that Germany had furthermore not formulated such a demand. To the objection that this was incomprehensible, Mr. von Jagow replied that as a diplomat he had naturally thought of asking it, but at the moment when Mr. von Jagow was called to give the matter his attention, the Emperor had already engaged himself to such a point that it was too late for diplomatic action, and there was nothing further to do. The situation presented itself in such a

way that one could no longer modify the clauses of the ultimatum. Finally he (Jagow) thought that the omission would also have its good side, that the good impression which one could make from the German side at St. Petersburg and at Paris, through declaring that we had not collaborated in the Vienna ultimatum."*

What, then, was the understanding with Austria? We cannot tell exactly, but her general intentions are plain from the statement made by the Austrian ambassador at Constantinople to our own ambassador.

"The Austrian Ambassador, the Marquis Pallavicini, also practically admitted that the Central Powers had precipitated the war. On August 18th, Francis Joseph's birthday, I made the usual ambassadorial visit of congratulation. Quite naturally the conversation turned upon the Emperor, who had that day passed his 84th year. Pallavicini spoke about him with the utmost pride and veneration. He told me how keen-minded and clear-headed the aged Emperor was, how he had the most complete understanding of international affairs, and gave everything his personal supervision. To illustrate the Austrian Kaiser's grasp of public events, Pallavicini instanced the present war. The previous May, Palla-

* Translated from *L'Humanité* (Paris), Mars 26, 1917.

vicini had had an audience with Francis Joseph in Vienna. At that time, Pallavicini told me, the Emperor had said that a European war was unavoidable. The Central Powers would not accept the Treaty of Bucharest as a settlement of the Balkan question, and only a general war, the Emperor had told Pallavicini, could ever settle that problem. The Treaty of Bucharest, I may recall, was the settlement that ended the second Balkan war. This divided the European dominions of the Balkan States, excepting Constantinople and a small piece of adjoining territory, among the Balkan nations, chiefly Serbia and Greece. That treaty strengthened Serbia greatly; so much did it increase Serbia's resources, indeed, that Austria feared that it had laid the beginning of a new European state that might grow sufficiently strong to resist her own plans of aggrandizement. Austria held a large Serbian population under her yoke in Bosnia and Herzegovina; these Serbians desired, above everything else, annexation to their own country. Moreover, the Pan-German plans in the East necessitated the destruction of Serbia, the state, which, so long as it stood intact, blocked the Germanic road to the East. It had been the Austro-German expectation that the Balkan War would destroy Serbia as a nation—that Turkey would simply annihilate King Peter's forces. This was precisely what the Germanic plans demanded, and for this reason Austria and Germany did nothing to prevent the Balkan wars. But the

result was exactly the reverse; out of the conflict arose a stronger Serbia than ever, standing firm like a breakwater against the Germanic path. Most historians agree that the Treaty of Bucharest made inevitable this war. I have the Marquis Pallavicini's evidence that this was likewise the opinion of Francis Joseph himself. The audience at which the Emperor made this statement was held in May, more than a month before the assassination of the Grand Duke. Clearly, therefore, the war would have come irrespective of the calamity at Serajevo. That merely served as the convenient pretext for the war upon which the Central Empires had already decided."*

It is not necessary to assume with the German author of "J'Accuse" that the crown prince and General Staff forced the Kaiser into war. The Kaiser's remark at Kiel, "It is a crime against *Deutschtum*," is significant, and to understand his subsequent course of action it is merely necessary to remember that he is an irresponsible and hot-headed monarch, who, as we have seen above, was able to go ahead without consulting even his own ministers.

Emperor William II had been particularly friendly to the murdered archduke, Francis

* Henry Morgenthau, *World's Work*, June, 1918, pp. 171–2.

Ferdinand; and to one hereditary autocrat the murder of another, as the Kaiser explained to the Czar in his telegram of July 28, is a serious matter. It is, furthermore, more than probable that after the Austrian attempt against Serbia in 1913, and with Franz Joseph's disposition, as revealed by Pallavicini, the Central Powers had already planned aggressive action in the Balkans, and were merely waiting for an occasion. Indeed, the Kaiser and Francis Ferdinand had had a meeting at Konapisht less than a month before the tragedy of Serajevo, and it is likely that the archduke's fatal journey had some connection with important plans in the interest of *Deutschtum*. That conference, which has often been overlooked, is probably crucial in the history of the war. What happened there is now known only to William II, but it is well to ponder carefully the statement of Savic, who says: "At this fatal meeting a compact was entered into, under which the map of Central Europe was to be transformed and the peace of the world was doomed." *

* V. R. Savic, "Southwestern Europe," p. 111. Prince Lichnowsky refers to the conference at Konapisht as something unquestioned. See his statement below.

This would explain the Kaiser's remark at Kiel after the murder of Francis Ferdinand that it meant not only the death of a friend and prospective allied ruler (Francis Joseph was nearly eighty-four), but the endangering of whatever plans had been made.

The Kaiser had already shown to what a degree of belligerency he could be moved at the time of the expedition to China. He returned to Berlin from Kiel in much the same frame of mind. Serbia must be chastised in the interests of *Deutschtum*, even if, as seemed probable, Russia and France should be drawn in—for if there were to be war only against Serbia there was no need of the Potsdam war conference at all.

Germany was ready. There is a German proverb: When you want to hang a dog you can always find a rope with which to hang him. The assassination of the archduke was to be used for the execution of Serbia, for which preparations had already been under way. The unusual military measures taken by Germany before June, 1914, her buying of hospital and munition supplies, her embargo on the

shipment of pneumatic tires, etc., tend to confirm this.*

But in spite of the seeming clearness of the evidence historians should be critical of the intentions attributed by belligerents to their enemies especially in this most crucial matter of the responsibility for the war. No question at issue can interest us Americans, lovers of peace, more deeply than this or have more serious bearing on our plans for the future and that world peace which from the first our country and our President have desired.

We have seen how German and Austrian ambassadors like Wangenheim and Pallavicini, in the early days of what promised to be for them a successful war, gloried in the fact that their countries had provoked it. Perhaps, however, their patriotism led them to give their countries credit which they did not deserve. Some years have now intervened and the time has come when we can consult other wings of responsible and informed opinion in Germany.

Let us consider first the final conclusions of Doctor Mühlon, whose position in the social

* "Le Mensonge du 3 Août," p. 9.

and industrial world brought him close to the leaders of Germany. It was not one at which he arrived hastily or through any personal pique, and he gave it of his own motion to the *Journal de Genève*, where it appeared on May 2, 1917.

"The essential points of my statement have been known for a long time, and the German government has not denied them. They are:

"I. That, according to the German point of view, Austria-Hungary was to chastise Serbia without a third power having the right to intervene.

"II. That the Russian mobilization would have as its immediate consequence the declaration of war of Germany. . . .

"What is perhaps new in my statement is that I show that the attitude of the Emperor in person was resolutely fixed in the direction of the two points of view mentioned above. Whoever was familiar at that time with circumstances in Germany could not doubt that the Emperor in person would take a strong stand on the question. . . .

"The facts alone are important. Mobilization did not necessarily mean war, and the Austrians knew it better than anyone, they who were used to long mobilizations that did not imply war.

"There may have been in this world war a considerable number who were guilty in the

broad sense of the word, and for a long time back, but of guilty persons in the strict sense of the word, there is only a small number, and when we consider the events recounted, we see that they were only in Berlin and Vienna."

The surest measure of the sincerity of a man's views is his willingness to suffer for them. Doctor Mühlon voluntarily gave up his distinguished position and his native land and removed to Switzerland in order to be free to speak the truth as he knew it. Of his sincerity there can, therefore, be no doubt. But some one may say, he may, in spite of his connections, not have been well informed.

Before, therefore, finally making the most serious accusations against Germany and taxing her with bad faith in her diplomacy and with the responsibility for the greatest war in history, let us call up, even at the risk of appearing tedious, one last witness of whose competence there can be no question. Prince Lichnowsky was the German ambassador in England from 1912 to the outbreak of the war, and he therefore held one of the most important diplomatic posts of his country. His testimony

is the more impressive, since he wrote not for his own time but sought to set down for his family archives a record that would be read and scrutinized in the light of all the facts by men who would call these times ancient. Through the indiscretion or treachery of an acquaintance they were published prematurely and their author acknowledged them. We reprint the sections that bear most directly on this momentous question.

"On board the *Meteor* we learned of the death of the archducal heir to the throne. His Majesty regretted that his efforts to win that prince's support for his ideas had thus been rendered vain. Whether the plan of an active policy against Serbia had already been decided on at Konopischt, I am not in a position to know.

"As I was not kept posted regarding views and proceedings in Vienna, I did not attach very great importance to this event. All that I could ascertain later was that among Austrian aristocrats a feeling of relief outweighed other sentiments. On board the *Meteor*, also as a guest of His Majesty, was an Austrian, Count Felix Thun. In spite of the splendid weather, he had remained in his cabin all the time, suffering from sea-sickness. After receiving the news, however, he was well. Alarm or joy had cured him. . . .

"Subsequently I learned that, at the decisive conference at Potsdam on July 5th, the Vienna inquiry received the unqualified assent of all the controlling authorities, with the further suggestion that it would not be a bad thing if war with Russia should result. At least this statement was made in the Austrian protocol which Count Mensdorff (Austrian ambassador) received in London. . . .

"It would, of course, have required only a hint from Berlin to induce Count Berchtold to content himself with a diplomatic success and quietly accept the Serbian answer. This hint, however, was not given. On the contrary, pressure was exercised in favor of war. It would have been so fine a success.

"After our refusal Sir Edward Grey begged us to come forward with a proposal of our own. We insisted on war.

"The impression grew continually stronger that we desired war under any circumstances. In no other way was it possible to interpret our attitude on a question which, after all, did not directly concern us. The urgent requests and explicit declarations of M. Sazonof, followed by the Czar's positively humble telegrams; the repeated proposals of Sir Edward Grey; the warnings of Marquis di San Giuliano and of Signor Bollati; my own urgent counsels—all were of no avail. Berlin would not budge; Serbia must be massacred. . . .

"Soon after this events were precipitated. Until this time, following the directions he re-

ceived from Berlin, Count Berchtold had played the part of the strong man. When at last he decided to change his course, and after Russia had negotiated and waited a whole week in vain, we answered the Russian mobilization with the ultimatum and the declaration of war. . . .

"It is shown by all official publications and is not disproved by our White Book, which, owing to the poverty of its contents and to its omissions, constitutes a grave indictment against ourselves, that:

"1. We encouraged Count Berchtold to attack Serbia, although no German interest was involved, and the danger of a World War must have been known to us. Whether we were acquainted with the wording of the ultimatum is completely immaterial.

"2. During the period between the 23d and the 30th of July, 1914, when M. Sazonof emphatically declared that he could not tolerate an attack on Serbia, we rejected the British proposals of mediation, although Serbia, under Russian and British pressure, had accepted almost the whole of the ultimatum, and although an agreement about the two points at issue could easily have been reached and Count Berchtold was even prepared to content himself with the Serbian reply.

"3. On the 30th of July, when Count Berchtold showed a disposition to change his course, we sent an ultimatum to St. Petersburg merely because of the Russian mobilization, and though

Austria had not been attacked; and on the 31st of July we declared war against the Russians, although the Czar pledged his word that he would not permit a single man to march as long as negotiations were still going on. Thus we deliberately destroyed the possibility of a peaceful settlement.

"In view of these incontestable facts, it is no wonder that the whole civilized world outside of Germany places the sole responsibility for the World War upon our shoulders."*

In this spirit the rulers of Germany, the Kaiser and the military party, were acting, and in accordance with it the Imperial German Chancellor, on August 1, 1914, instructed the German ambassador at Petrograd to submit a statement which, after attributing all the blame to Russia, declared a state of war with that country.

On the 3d of August Baron von Schoen, German ambassador at Paris, submitted a declaration of war against France,† also alleging that French aviators had violated Belgian territory (this to prepare the world for the German invasion), and that one of them had tried to de-

* American Association for International Conciliation, "The Disclosures from Germany," June, 1918, pp. 321–343.

† "French Yellow Book," No. 147.

stroy establishments near Wesel. (The instructions from Berlin to Schoen had made this more definite and plausible, and had ordered him to say that this aviator had been shot down at the railroad-station at Wesel!) This statement could have been very easily verified by a photograph, the name of the aviator, who must have been either killed or captured, or by the wrecked aeroplane. France denied it categorically and has proved it untrue. Schoen's statement further alleged that another had dropped bombs on the railroad near Karlsruhe and Nuremberg. This statement, after circulating for two years, was denied by the municipal authorities of Nuremberg in the following terms:

"The commandant *ad interim* of the III Bavarian Army Corps has no knowledge that on the railroad Nuremberg-Kissengen and Nuremberg-Ansbach before or after the outbreak of war bombs by enemy aviators were ever dropped. All statements and newspaper reports in this connection have proved themselves false."*

After oblique diplomacy a lying declaration of war. This was Germany's course. But the

* *Cf.* "Le Mensonge du 3 Août," pp. 123–242.

false statements could not be immediately controlled. Some of the German statesmen themselves may have believed them at the time. In any case it was thought that the war would be over before they could be disproved, and that success which, in Von Moltke's phrase, "alone justifies war," would make later discussion superfluous. By her disingenuous attempt to make Russia and France appear the aggressors, we have seen that Germany had hoped to bring Italy to her side, and induce England to remain neutral. In both these attempts she failed. She did succeed, however, in uniting her population and bringing all classes enthusiastically into the war.

It was after this fashion, therefore, that in the language of William II, "the sword had been forced" into his hand.

CHAPTER IV

STRICT NEUTRALITY

"IN the wars of the European Powers in matters relating to themselves we have never taken any part, nor does it comport with our policy to do so." These words in President Monroe's historic message of December 2, 1823, had become by 1914 a national habit of thought. It was inevitable, therefore, that when the Powers of Europe were declaring war upon each other we should have taken our stand on the basis of old principles. We were bewildered and confused. The affairs in the Balkans had interested us but little. There had, to be sure, been rumors of war, but we had not believed that war would really come. We were too little acquainted with the new Prussia, and too much under the spell of the old Germany to be able to believe that any nation in these days would deliberately provoke war. To us it seemed at first like a force of nature, a cata-

clysm. It is with nations as with individuals; in a sudden crisis they decide on the principle of their former reiterated decisions—on their precedents. Accordingly, on August 4, 1914, President Wilson proclaimed America neutral in the war between Austria and Serbia, Germany and Russia, and Germany and France. Similar proclamations of neutrality were to be made as other nations entered the war, and the word "neutrality" was to characterize our attitude to the date of our own entrance into the conflict.

Our policy was, therefore, in every sense in full accord with our history. We had promptly assumed the attitude which Washington and his advisers had formulated in the wars of the French Revolution. "This policy of 1793," in the opinion of a distinguished English authority, "constitutes an epoch in the development of the usages of neutrality." It represents the most advanced existing opinions of what neutral obligations were, and "in some points it went further than authoritative international custom has up to the present time advanced." *

* Hall's "International Law," 4th edition, 1895, p. 616; quoted by James Brown Scott, "A Survey of International Relations Between the United States and Germany," p. 45.

The Monroe Doctrine made it natural that we should revert to this policy, and our neutrality was, therefore, not something new, strange, or unfamiliar to the nations. It was the conscientious policy of Washington, with such additions as subsequent experience had suggested. It was, as James Scott Brown clearly describes it, "the neutrality which recognized belligerent duties as well as neutral rights, and which, by apt laws, sought to prevent assaults upon neutral rights and to compel the performance of neutral duties." *

Yet it was not to be a purely passive neutrality. It was to be, if we dare put it paradoxically, a neutrality benevolent to both sides. For we imagined that, like ourselves, the belligerents, too, looked upon war as a great calamity and that all parties would welcome serious effort on our part to bring back peace and justice. Until we ourselves were forced into the conflict, this was to be the aim of our government. The proposal for a world peace offered by President Wilson on January 22, 1917, was the last act in a policy which he had doubtless had in

* J. B. Scott, "A Survey of International Relations Between the United States and Germany," p. 45.

mind from the outset. For this reason, on August 19, 1914, he issued to the American people the following proclamation:

"My fellow countrymen: I suppose that every thoughtful man in America has asked himself, during these last troubled weeks, what influence the European War may exert upon the United States, and I take the liberty of addressing a few words to you in order to point out that it is entirely within our own choice what its effects upon us will be, and to urge very earnestly upon you the sort of speech and conduct which will best safeguard the nation against distress and disaster.

"The effect of the war upon the United States will depend upon what American citizens say and do. Every man who really loves America will act and speak in the true spirit of neutrality, which is the spirit of impartiality and fairness and friendliness to all concerned. The spirit of the nation in this critical matter will be determined largely by what individuals and society and those gathered in public meetings do and say, upon what newspapers and magazines contain, upon what ministers utter in their pulpits, and men proclaim as their opinions on the street.

"The people of the United States are drawn from many nations, and chiefly from the nations now at war. It is natural and inevitable that there should be the utmost variety of sympathy and desire among them with regard to

the issues and circumstances of the conflict. Some will wish one nation, others another, to succeed in the momentous struggle. It will be easy to excite passion and difficult to allay it. Those responsible for exciting it will assume a heavy responsibility, responsibility for no less a thing than that the people of the United States, whose love of their country and whose loyalty to its government should unite them as Americans all, bound in honor and affection to think first of her and her interests, may be divided in camps of hostile opinion, hot against each other, involved in the war itself in impulse and opinion if not in action.

"Such divisions among us would be fatal to our peace of mind and might seriously stand in the way of the proper *performance of our duty as the one great nation at peace, the one people holding itself ready to play a part of impartial mediation and speak the counsels of peace and accommodation, not as a partisan, but as a friend.*

"I venture, therefore, my fellow countrymen, to speak a solemn word of warning to you against that deepest, most subtle, most essential breach of neutrality which may spring out of partisanship, out of passionately taking sides. The United States must be neutral in fact as well as in name during these days that are to try men's souls. We must be impartial in thought as well as in action, must put a curb upon our sentiments as well as upon every transaction that might be construed as a preference of one party to the struggle before another.

"My thought is of America. I am speaking,

I feel sure, the earnest wish and purpose of every thoughtful American that this great country of ours, which is, of course, the first in our thoughts and in our hearts, should show herself in this time of peculiar trial a nation fit beyond others to exhibit the fine poise of undisturbed judgment, the dignity of self-control, the efficiency of dispassionate action; a nation that neither sits in judgment upon others nor is disturbed in her own counsels and which keeps herself fit and free to do what is honest and disinterested and truly serviceable for the peace of the world.

"Shall we not resolve to put upon ourselves the restraints which will bring to our people the happiness *and the great and lasting influence for peace we covet for them?*"*

It is important for those who would understand the steps which brought the war to our doors to remember this initial act of our President. America, in the interest of all, was to be the peacemaker. Nothing could have better shown our friendly disposition toward all parties

* This proclamation was evidently issued after careful reflection on our relations to the World War in general. Belgium had already been invaded and the German chancellor had announced the violation of the treaty guaranteeing Belgium's neutrality. It would appear as if this had at first given us pause, for our proclamations declaring neutrality between various belligerents were dated as follows: Austria-Hungary and Serbia, Germany and Russia, Germany and France, August 4; Germany and Great Britain, August 5; Austria-Hungary and Russia, August 7; Great Britain and Austria-Hungary, August 13; France and

to the conflict. No one could have been more determined to keep our own country at peace than were the representatives of the American people in 1914. The policy they had outlined was to be maintained with strictest impartiality on our part, and if we were finally forced to surrender it, it was through no will of our own. It was to become plain, month by month, that against a belligerent like Germany an attitude of neutrality in the interest of a general world peace was impossible. Never from the first had she any intention of respecting our rights and sovereignty any more than she respected Belgium's. Slowly, and against his will, the President was therefore to become convinced of this until on April 2, 1917, he was compelled by the evidence to reach the following conclusion:

"One of the things that have served to convince us that the Prussian autocracy was not

Austria-Hungary, August 14; Belgium and Germany (where the first blows in the war had been struck in the west), August 18. The delay in this latest declaration may be due to accident. To us it seems more probable that after consideration of the fact that we were not parties to the violated treaty, Washington decided to pursue steadily the policy of non-interference in European matters. The following day President Wilson's announcement to the American people was presented in the Senate, and ordered printed. *Cf. American Journal of International Law*, Special Supplement, July, 1915, pp. 194–200.

and could never be our friend is that from the very outset of the present war it has filled our unsuspecting communities and even our offices of Government with spies and set criminal intrigues everywhere afoot against our national unity of council, our peace within and without, our industries and our commerce.

"Indeed, it is now evident that its spies were here even before the war began, and it is, unhappily, not a matter of conjecture, but a fact proved in our courts of justice, that the intrigues which have more than once come perilously near to disturbing the peace and dislocating the industries of the country have been carried on at the instigation, with the support, and even under the personal direction, of official agents of the Imperial German Government accredited to the Government of the United States."*

Not until the declaration of war, however, did the President or his advisers permit the government to depart in the slightest from the course formulated, a course of implied and frequently expressed good-will and friendship to Germany. The government was to cling desperately to this policy long after a great part of the American people recognized it as impossible. Indeed it was plain to most Americans that after what had

* A detailed account of the violations of American rights by German spies and German agents will be found in Chapter VIII.

happened in Belgium, it was useless to ask individuals to be neutral in "thought and opinion" toward a Power which was overriding all considerations of law and humanity. But this attitude of neutrality of thought which the President had enjoined upon us was neither necessary nor was it expected of us even by Germany. For the German conception had been officially defined in her war manual.

"It is here assumed that neutrality is not to be regarded as synonymous with indifference and impartiality with regard to the belligerent parties and the continuance of the war. As to the expression 'partisanship,' neutral states can only be expected to observe international courtesies; as long as these are observed, there is no reason to interfere." *

These international courtesies were observed to the letter with regard to Germany even more so than with regard to England. As we look back, it is interesting to note the difference in our tone, and occasionally, indeed, in our attitude, toward England and toward Germany. It would almost seem as if the government had expected violations of international law from

* *Kriegsbrauch im Landkriege*, Berlin, 1902, p. 69.

Britain and a speedy and willing compliance from Prussia.*

Nothing illustrates this better than our correspondence with England with regard to lists of contraband at a time when we failed to protest to Germany against so flagrant an offense as that which the German Embassy committed in inserting in New York papers the notice warning American citizens not to take ship on the *Lusitania;* so serious an interference in our rights that it would have justified our government in immediately handing Count von Bernstorff his passports.

To understand the discussions with England we must remember that the Hague Conferences had fixed no lists of contraband to which all the Powers would agree. Such an attempt had been made in the Declaration of London, in 1908–9, but had not at the outbreak of the present war been ratified by a sufficient number of belligerent Powers to be reckoned a part of the ac-

* It is merely necessary to call the reader's attention to Washington's insistence on the "ancient friendship between their people and our own" in the President's Address to Congress, announcing the severance of diplomatic relations on February 3, 1917. Phrases of like purport are found in the notes after the *Lusitania* and *Sussex* sinkings. No such special considerations are urged in our notes to England, and they appear curt in comparison.

cepted law of nations. Our State Department on August 6, 1914, however, had proposed to the belligerents that this declaration be accepted. Whether they would do so or not was a matter of choice, and as France, Russia, and Great Britain suggested modifications, the proposal was withdrawn by us on October 22, 1914, and we fell back on our own treaties and the rules of International Law.* The question of what constitutes contraband was in the absence of any such general agreement a matter for discussion, though we could hardly claim as neutrals what we had denied to other neutrals when we ourselves had been belligerents.

In President Lincoln's Proclamations of June 13 and 24, 1865, he had listed as contraband "all articles from which ammunition is manufactured," and Secretary of State Hay, at the time of the Boxer troubles had included both copper and raw cotton as among such articles.† In spite of this, however, the United States refused to acquiesce in Great Britain's treatment

* *American Journal of International Law*, Special Supplement, July, 1915, pp. 7–8.

† Telegram to Mr. Rockhill, American commissioner, March 19, 1901. This whole question of contraband is thoroughly discussed by Scott in "A Survey of International Relations," pp. 74–105.

of copper shipments as contraband, and Secretary of State Bryan was compelled frankly to admit the awkwardness of the situation in his letter to Senator Stone of January 8, 1915.

"The United States has now under consideration the question of the right of a belligerent to include 'copper unwrought' in its list of absolute contraband instead of in its list of conditional contraband. As the Government of the United States has in the past placed 'all articles from which ammunition is manufactured' in its contraband list, and has declared copper to be among such materials, it necessarily finds some embarrassment in dealing with the subject.

"Moreover, there is no instance of the United States acquiescing in Great Britain's seizure of copper shipments. *In every case in which it had been done vigorous representations have been made to the British Government, and the representatives of the United States have pressed for the release of the shipments.*" *

Neither in this matter of contraband nor in any other did we make the slightest concession to England. Her request that Canadian soldiers who were returning from Europe, and who, whether owing to wounds or otherwise, had been discharged as unfit for further service, be al-

* *Am. Jour. Inter. Law,* Special Supplement, July, 1915, p. 258.

lowed to pass through the State of Maine on their way home from Saint John's, New Brunswick, was denied, although it might have been granted without impropriety.

In contrast with this scrupulous insistence on our rights with England, when the German Embassy had been guilty of a capital breach of international decorum, to say the least, the Secretary of State,* took no action at the time and referred to it only with "regret" in the first *Lusitania* note, to call attention to the fact that such a warning could not be considered as an excuse in the following terms:

"There was recently published in the newspapers of the United States, I regret to inform the Imperial German Government, a formal warning, purporting to come from the Imperial German Embassy at Washington, addressed to the people of the United States, and stating, in effect, that any citizen of the United States who exercised his right of free travel upon the seas would do so at his peril if his journey should take him within the zone of waters within which the Imperial German Navy was using submarines against the Commerce of Great Britain and France, notwithstanding the respectful

* It is generally assumed that this note was written by President Wilson.

but very earnest protest of his Government, the Government of the United States. I do not refer to this for the purpose of calling the attention of the Imperial German Government at this time* to the surprising irregularity of a communication from the Imperial German Embassy at Washington addressed to the people of the United States through the newspapers, but only for the purpose of pointing out that no warning that an unlawful and inhumane act will be committed can possibly be accepted as an excuse or palliation for that act or as an abatement of the responsibility for its commission." †

Furthermore, as early as January 20, 1915, the Secretary of State wrote to the chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations:

"The Department of Justice has recently apprehended at least four persons of German nationality, who, it is alleged, obtained American passports under pretense of being American citizens and for the purpose of returning to Germany without molestation by her enemies during the voyage. There are indications that a systematic plan had been devised to obtain American passports through fraud for the purpose of securing passage for German officers and reservists desiring to return to Germany.

* No action was taken subsequently.

† *American Journal of International Law*, Special Supplement, July, 1915, p. 132.

Such fraudulent use of passports by Germans themselves can have no other effect than to cast suspicion upon American passports in general."*

At the time this letter was written by our Secretary of State, evidence was in the possession of our Department of Justice which proved conclusively, as we shall see in a later chapter, that this wholesale counterfeiting which "cast suspicion on American passports in general," was being carried on in an office maintained by the German Embassy and directed by officers paid by them. Yet no action was taken and no protest made to Berlin. Instead the State Department merely passed new regulations requiring the attaching of a photograph, and expressed the hope that this would "prevent any further misuse of American passports." There is, therefore, absolutely no basis of fact for the accusation that in our interpretation of our rights as neutrals we favored England as against Germany; an excellent case could be made out to prove the contrary, and it is certainly true that toward Germany we

* *American Journal of International Law*, Special Supplement, July, 1915, p. 262.

were lenient to a degree never exhibited toward the other belligerents.

In proportion as the war progressed England's control of the seas became more and more secure, and Germany was forced to accept increased difficulties in her attempts to obtain supplies and to maintain communication with the outside world. Great Britain also attempted to establish a blockade of Germany which was a long-recognized and universally accepted measure of naval warfare, and one which Great Britain herself had admitted, when at the time of the Civil War we blockaded the Southern ports, even though it ruined her cotton industry and threw thousands of her citizens into poverty and bankruptcy.

It is not our purpose to discuss here whether or not the British did succeed in effectively or legally establishing such a blockade. It is sufficient to say that we recognized and acquiesced in none of her measures which went beyond recognized right, and we protested in every case where her procedure was open to question. As a natural consequence of British naval su-

premacy England was in any case able to cut off most neutral trade from Germany, including our own, just as Germany, through the less effective activity of her raiders, attempted to cut off and interfere as far as possible with trade to Britain. Through all this period Germany made much pretense of being the defender of the principle of freedom of the seas. That she was, however, no more solicitous of our rights than her adversaries were, was manifest in the case of the *William P. Frye*, an American vessel carrying a cargo of wheat to the British Isles. The *Frye* was captured by the German raider *Prince Eitel Friedrich* on January 28, 1915, and sunk with her cargo. The sinking was in violation of our treaties of 1799 and 1828 with Prussia, and our government presented a claim for the value of the ship and a protest against the violation. The discussion which followed is particularly interesting, since on November 29, 1915, in the communication which closed the case there occurs the following promise, which should be kept in mind when appraising Germany's good faith in her subsequent negotiations with the United States:

"The German Government quite shares the view of the American Government that all possible care must be taken for the security of the crew and passengers of a vessel to be sunk. Consequently, the persons found on board of a vessel may not be ordered into her lifeboats except when the general conditions, that is to say, the weather, the condition of the sea, and the neighborhood of the coast afford absolute certainty that the boats will reach the nearest port. For the rest the German Government begs to point out that in cases where German naval forces have sunk neutral vessels for carrying contraband, no loss of life has yet occurred." *

The fact that the English Navy had practically driven German war-ships from the seas not only made it difficult or impossible for neutrals to land supplies in Germany, but also made it possible for neutral commerce unmolested to carry supplies of all sorts to the Allied governments. There is no obligation whatever in international law upon a neutral government to forbid its subjects or citizens to send supplies to belligerents. Great Britain and France were very far from being prepared for this war

* Scott, "A Survey of International Relations Between the United States and Germany," p. 332.

to the same degree that Germany had been, and, naturally, when the seas were open, they bought from American manufacturers large quantities of munitions of war. There is no question that these shipments were useful to the Allies. There is also no question that they were entirely legal. America was doing only what Germany and Austria had repeatedly done. Prussian subjects sold large quantities of ammunition to Russia during the Crimean War, and since that time German subjects have supplied all belligerents who needed munitions and who had money to buy them. Germany and Austria-Hungary, as Secretary Lansing pointed out, sold munitions of war to Great Britain in her war with the Boer Republics, although the Boers had neither ships nor seacoast, and could consequently not import them. It had in its own practice never fixed any limit to this trade, but it is only fair to say that in the *Kriegsbrauch im Landkriege*, issued in 1902, though she admitted the right of subjects of neutral states to supply belligerents with contraband, she tried to make a distinction between supplying it in small quantities and on a large scale. Yet after this Germany had furnished the Turks

with ammunition in their war against Italy, and both Austria and Germany had furnished munitions to belligerents in the Balkan wars without establishing any limit. Not only, therefore, was there no legal reason why the United States should prevent this traffic, but in permitting it she was merely following "the long-established practice of the two empires in the matter of trade in war supplies."

There was in addition to the question of principle a practical and substantial reason why the government of the United States has from the foundation of the republic to the present advocated and practised an unrestricted trade in arms and military supplies:

"It has never been the policy of this country to maintain in time of peace," wrote Secretary Lansing, "a large military establishment of stores of arms and ammunition sufficient to repel invasion by a well equipped and powerful enemy. It has desired to remain at peace with all nations and to avoid any appearance of menacing such peace by the threat of its armies and navies. In consequence of this standing policy the United States would, in the event of attack by a foreign power, be at the outset of the war seriously, if not fatally, embarrassed by the lack of arms and ammunition and by

the means to produce them in sufficient quantities to supply the requirements of national defense. The United States has always depended upon the right and power to purchase arms and ammunition from neutral nations in case of foreign attack. This right, which it claims for itself, it cannot deny to others.

"Manifestly the application of this theory would result in every nation becoming an armed camp, ready to resist aggression and tempted to employ force in asserting its rights rather than appeal to reason and justice for the settlement of international disputes.

"Perceiving, as it does, that the adoption of the principle that it is the duty of a neutral to prohibit the sale of arms and ammunition to a belligerent during the progress of a war would inevitably give the advantage to the belligerent which had encouraged the manufacture of munitions in time of peace and which had laid in vast stores of arms and ammunition in anticipation of war, the Government of the United States is convinced that the adoption of the theory would force militarism on the world and work against that universal peace which is the desire and purpose of all nations which exalt justice and righteousness in their relations with one another." *

While both Austria and Germany could not but admit the right of our citizens to sell mu-

* Secretary Lansing to Ambassador Penfield, August 12, 1915. *Cf. American Journal of International Law*, Special Supplement, July, 1915, pp. 168–9.

nitions to belligerents, they tried by direct representation and by press campaigns in this country to bring about its complete suppression or at least its restriction. It was for this reason that Senator Stone, then chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, brought up this question among others in his letter to the Secretary of State on January 8, 1915. The whole question is summed up in the last paragraph of Secretary Bryan's detailed reply of January 20:

"If any American citizens, partisans of Germany and Austria-Hungary, feel that this administration is acting in a way injurious to the cause of those countries, this feeling results from the fact that on the high seas the German and Austro-Hungarian naval power is thus far inferior to the British. It is the business of a belligerent operating on the high seas, not the duty of a neutral, to prevent contraband from reaching an enemy. Those in this country who sympathize with Germany and Austria-Hungary appear to assume that some obligation rests upon this Government in the performance of its neutral duty to prevent all trade in contraband, and thus to equalize the difference due to the relative naval strength of the belligerents. No such obligation exists; it would be an unneutral act, an act of partiality on the part of this Government to adopt such a policy

if the Executive had the power to do so. If Germany and Austria-Hungary can not import contraband from this country, it is not, because of that fact, the duty of the United States to close its markets to the allies. The markets of this country are open upon equal terms to all the world, to every nation, belligerent or neutral.

"The foregoing categorical replies to specific complaints is sufficient answer to the charge of unfriendliness to Germany and Austria-Hungary."*

We have dealt with this question at length because it illustrates how Germany chafed because of her defeat on the seas, and because it was destined to bring about an attitude of marked hostility on the part of the German people toward the United States. So acute did this hostility become that later, when American sympathizers with Germany raised a fund for the relief of distressed families in Germany, and it was decided to turn this over to the town councils in Germany for distribution, these councils refused to accept it.† Nor was this confined to the civilian population. Through

* *American Journal of International Law*, Special Supplement, July, 1915, p. 266–7.

† Former Consul Roth, of Plauen, in article in New York *Times*, June 30, 1918.

diplomatic channels Austria-Hungary and Germany had failed to induce America to depart in their interest from the principles of international law. They were now as only too frequently to have recourse to the underhand methods which were to become so distressingly familiar. As a result of his attempts to cripple the Bethlehem Steel Company and the plants in the Middle West, Doctor Constantine Dumba had to be recalled by his government. It was discovered that this Austro-Hungarian ambassador to the United States was engaged in the attempt to cripple the Bethlehem Steel Company and other munition factories in the East and Middle West. For this amazing interference by a foreign ambassador in American affairs, Secretary Lansing demanded Doctor Dumba's recall and the demand was acceded to by Vienna. It is now known that the German ambassador, Count von Bernstorff, was equally guilty, though at the time he escaped detection by effrontery. German underhand practice and offenses against the sovereignty of the United States were, however, so frequent and important that they must be considered later in a separate chapter.

The German Emperor did not fail to show his hostility to America and our ambassador, whom he refused to receive and who had difficulty thereafter in obtaining the necessary diplomatic interviews. The whole attitude of Germany toward America from this time forward is perhaps best represented by what happened when Mr. Gerard had his important conference with Wilhelm II on October 22, 1915:

"The Emperor was standing," says he, "so naturally I stood also; and according to his habit . . . he stood very close to me and talked very earnestly. . . He showed, however, great bitterness against the United States and repeatedly said, 'America had better look out after this war'; and 'I shall stand no nonsense from America after the war.' . . . I was so fearful in reporting the dangerous part of this interview, on account of the many spies not only in my own embassy but also in the State Department, that I sent but a very few words in a roundabout way by courier direct to the President."*

It was to be evident in the submarine campaign which followed that in his measures

* Ambassador Gerard, "My Four Years in Germany," 1917, pp. 251–253.

against neutrals the Kaiser and his advisers were not to be henceforth restrained (if they ever had been) by any recognition of American rights, and the spirit of the whole submarine warfare may be read out of these undisguised threats made to our ambassador at Berlin.

CHAPTER V

ALIENATION OF AMERICAN SYMPATHIES

THE United States finally entered the war against Germany as the result of a long series of actions which proved that we were dealing, in President Wilson's expressive phrase, with "an irresponsible Government which has thrown aside all considerations of humanity and of right and is running amuck." If a "just and necessary war" (granted that to-day there can be such a war) had arisen between Germany and Austria, on the one hand, and France, Russia, and Great Britain on the other, and had been conducted according to the recognized laws of war, there is no reason to believe that the majority of Americans would have sided against the Central Empires. They had not sided against Germany in 1870. Quite the contrary. Germans like Herkimer, Steuben, Karl Schurz, and Franz Sigel had played an important part in our history. The Germans were a large element in our emigrant population and

had proved themselves thrifty and law-abiding citizens. We had never been at war with their country; our old treaty with Prussia seemed to indicate that we were friendly rather than rival Powers. Indeed, the tension between us had never been as keen as it was between ourselves and France in the days of the French Revolution and the Directorate, and on our unswept political hearth there lay still the ashes of old wars with Britain. Toward neither side was there any initial hostility, however, though past relationships favored Germany, the land of the universities in which most of the leaders in our academic life had been trained. It is, therefore, fair to say that if the American people had taken any side it would have been that to which unprejudiced judgment on the issues of the war and its conduct forced them, and that in general the American people would have preferred to regard the conflict in accordance with our historic policy as a war in another world. From the President's Proclamation of August 19, 1914, we have seen that at the outset, our government had assumed that this was such a war. But even after we had refused to

pass judgment on the issues involved, Germany was to render impossible the continuance of this initial attitude of aloofness. She was to begin by throwing away the good-will of the world, and step by step her course was to alienate American sympathy also. She forced us to recognize in her, first the enemy to the peace of Europe and then the enemy to the peace of the world and to the life and institutions of all free peoples. Indeed, so flagrant was her conduct that the phrase "strictly neutral," which should have served as the standard of the American attitude, became among our people a by-word and reproach.

In this process of alienation the first step was her violation of the neutrality of Belgium, which, as one of the Powers signatory to the treaty of 1839 she had pledged herself to defend. The brutality and injustice of this act was made somewhat less shocking by the plea of guilty which the German chancellor promptly offered before the Reichstag. The world, however, condemned this treacherous aggression. To make amends, therefore, Germany began to vilify her innocent victim. Some weeks later,

in the course of the invasion, she claimed to have discovered memoranda of conversations between the English and Belgian military attachés, and falsely announced to the world that Belgium had forfeited her neutrality and had entered into an alliance with England. No one knew better than those responsible for this accusation how dishonest it was, for, as the ex-director of Krupp's was later to make plain, Belgium had such confidence in Germany's pledges that she was dependent on Krupp and German munition-makers for her war material. When, therefore, she was forced to defend herself against Germany her difficulties were much increased by the fact that the Allies, to whom she was forced to look for protection, could not provide the ammunition she used or the type of gun to which she was accustomed. If, therefore, Germany's act was brutal, her excuse was vicious. The morality of the whole procedure was summarized by a Swiss neutral, Karl Spitteler, who says:

"That a wrong was done to Belgium was originally openly confessed by the perpetrator. As an after-thought, in order to appear whiter,

Cain blackened Abel. In my opinion it was a spiritual blunder to rummage for documents in the pockets of the quivering victim. . . . To calumniate her in addition is really too much." *

Neutrals were not long to be allowed the poor consolation of believing that Germany's act was one of sudden and unaccountable desperation. That it was the expression of a philosophy of national life became evident a few days later, on the publication of Sir Edward Goschen's last interview with Von Bethmann-Hollweg. The chancellor, when he realized the momentous character of the impending conflict, which seems to have been arranged without his full knowledge, evidently used what little influence he had to prevent it. When, however, he saw the military party and his master, the Emperor, driving for war, he tried again to prevent England from entering the great mêlée. England, too, had guaranteed Belgium's neutrality and had announced through her ambassador that she would fight if that neutrality were violated. The German chancellor seems to have been unable to understand a course so

* *Cf.* Harding, "The Study of the Great War," p. 48.

plainly indicated. "He said that the step taken by His Majesty's Government was terrible to a degree, just for a word—'neutrality,' a word which in war-time had so often been disregarded—just for a scrap of paper Great Britain was going to make war." When the chancellor's "scrap of paper" became the subject of grim jest, Von Bethmann-Hollweg tried to volatilize from his acknowledged phrase the opprobrious connotations. But the excuses had much the same effect as Germany's accusations against Belgium after the violation.*

Time is the great corrector of history. It sets detail into perspective, and we are only now beginning to see how these acts fit into the drama of Germany's militaristic madness. They seemed to us at first impossible grotesques, but as time wore on and our knowledge of German purpose became clearer, it became evident that they were no exceptions, no gargoyles, but the keystones of the arch. When, after illegal and inhumane acts had been committed, the inquiries and protests of neutral governments

* Passelecq, "The Sincere Chancellor," in *The Nineteenth Century and After*, May, 1917.

failed to bring the punishment of offenders, or even excuses, we came painfully to realize that such acts were the result of a settled policy and in accordance with Prussian ideals. For just as the German conception held that the state was something absolute, that there was no judge above it, so war, the state in action, was also absolute and could be checked by no laws or principles of humanity and justice. Germany had, to be sure, signed the Conventions of The Hague, and by doing so had led us to believe that she, with other nations, would make some attempt to follow them. But that this was not the case becomes clear when we read the *Kriegsbrauch im Landkriege*,* the official publication of the General Staff, destined to instruct officers on the usages of war. Here we find not only a different set of principles, but the frank admission that The Hague Conferences had been signed merely for the purpose of disarming neutral suspicion.

"Attempts of this kind (to mitigate the horrors of war) will also not be wanting in the fu-

* *Cf.* also *L'Interprète Militaire*, the German publication for the guidance of officers in conquered territory.

ture, the more so as these agitations have found a kind of moral recognition in some provisions of the Geneva Convention and the Brussels and Hague Conferences. . . The danger that in this way he (the officer) will arrive at false views about the essential character of war must not be lost sight of. . . By steeping himself in military history an officer will be able to guard himself against excessive humanitarian notions; it will teach him that certain severities are indispensable to war, nay more, that the only true humanity very often lies in a ruthless application of them. . . .

"Every means of war without which the object of the war cannot be obtained is permissible. . . It follows from these universally valid principles that wide limits are set to the subjective freedom and arbitrary judgment of the commanding officer." *

At the very first, then, we were given clear indications of the truth which was to dawn upon us slowly, and which the President was to express nearly four years later when he announced that we could not take "the word of the present rulers of Germany as a guarantee of anything that is to endure," and that they were "incapable of making a covenanted peace."

After Germany's violations of the treaties

* *Cf.* Harding, "The Study of the Great War," p. 56.

we were to be further disillusioned about her methods of making war. How, we asked, will Germany treat these people whom she has wronged? The question was all the more pertinent since neutrals who have defended their neutrality are, according to The Hague Conventions, not guilty of any hostile act. We were not willing to hurry to conclusions. When President Poincaré called President Wilson's attention to what was happening, the latter refused at the time to act as judge, and, speaking for "a nation which abhors inhuman practices in the conduct of a war," replied on September 19, 1914:

"The time will come when this great conflict is over and when the truth can be impartially determined. When that time arrives those responsible for violations of the rules of civilized warfare, if such violations have occurred, and for false charges against their adversaries, must of course bear the burden of the judgment of the world."

Most of us did not imagine then that the war could last more than many months, but four years have now past and the time has come

when we can see what happened in something like its true perspective. Indeed, the whole question has been made the subject of rigorous examination by distinguished American historians, following the official investigations by Belgium, Germany, and the Bryce Commission. They have submitted all documents to scientific scrutiny and accepted only matter from German and American sources, and such other material as scrupulously scientific investigators would be justified in accepting. The results have been published in the studies edited by Professor Munro.*

That we may not be unjust in a matter which so easily arouses anger and detestation, let us confine ourselves entirely to records made by the Germans themselves. The German soldier is advised to keep a diary when on campaign and many of these diaries were captured. We may begin by quoting Joh. van der Schoot, reservist of the Tenth Company, 39th Reserve Infantry Regiment, Seventh Reserve Army Corps, who announces: "We lived like God in

* *Cf.* especially "German War Practices" and "German Treatment of Conquered Territory," on which we have drawn heavily. (Committee on Public Information.)

Belgium." Curiously enough he did not mean that they showed mercy or administered justice, as the following extracts will show:

"A horrible bath of blood. The whole village burnt, the French thrown into the blazing houses, civilians with the rest."—(From the diary of Private Hassemer, of the Eighth Army Corps.)

"In the night of August 18–19, the village of Saint-Maurice was punished for having fired on German soldiers by being burnt to the ground by the German troops (two regiments, the 12th Landwehr and the 17th). The village was surrounded, men posted about a yard from one another, so that no one could get out. Then the Uhlans set fire to it, house by house. Neither man, woman, nor child could escape; only the greater part of the live stock was carried off, as that could be used. Anyone who ventured to come out was shot down. All the inhabitants left in the village were burnt with the houses."—(From the diary of Private Karl Scheufele, of the Third Bavarian Regiment of Landwehr Infantry.)

"The inhabitants have fled in the village. It was horrible. There was clotted blood on all the beards, and what faces one saw, terrible to behold! The dead, sixty in all, were at once buried. Among them were many old women, some old men, and a half-delivered woman, awful to see; three children had clasped each

British official photograph. Copyright by Underwood & Underwood.

British soldiers conducting Belgian refugees to a place of safety.

"Germany had in that country instituted for a time at least a reign of terror."

other, and died thus. The altar and the vaults of the church are shattered. They had a telephone there to communicate with the enemy. This morning, September 2, all the survivors were expelled, and I saw four little boys carrying a cradle, with a baby five or six months old in it, on two sticks. All this was terrible to see. Shot after shot! Thunderbolt after thunderbolt! Everything is given over to pillage; fowls and the rest all killed. I saw a mother, too, with her two children; one had a great wound on the head and had lost an eye."—(From the diary of Lance-Corporal Paul Spielmann, of the Ersatz, First Brigade of Infantry of the Guard.)

"The pretty little village of Gue d'Ossus, however, was apparently set on fire without cause. A cyclist fell off his machine and his rifle went off. He immediately said he had been shot at. All the inhabitants were burnt in the houses. I hope there will be no more such horrors..

"At Leppe apparently 200 were shot. There must have been some innocent men among them. In future we shall have to hold an inquiry as to their guilt instead of shooting them.

"In the evening we marched to Maubert-Fontaine. Just as we were having our meal the alarm was sounded—every one is very jumpy.

"September 3rd. Still at Rethel, on guard over prisoners. . . . The houses are charming inside. The middle class in France has mag-

nificent furniture. We found stylish pieces everywhere and beautiful silk, but in what a state . . . Good God! . . . Every bit of furniture broken, mirrors smashed. The Vandals themselves could not have done more damage. This place is a disgrace to our army. The inhabitants who fled could not have expected, of course, that all their goods would have been left intact after so many troops had passed. But the column commanders are responsible for the greater part of the damage, as they could have prevented the looting and destruction. The damage amounts to millions of marks; even the safes have been attacked.

"In a solicitor's house, in which, as luck would have it, all was in excellent taste, including a collection of old lace and Eastern works of art, everything was smashed to bits.

"I could not resist taking a little memento myself here and there. . . . One house was particularly elegant, everything in the best taste. The hall was of light oak; I found a splendid raincoat under the staircase and a camera for Felix."—(From the diary of an officer in the 178th Regiment, Twelfth Saxon Corps.)

And inquiry proved that this was not the work of isolated individuals who had got out of hand. It was done with the knowledge, and in many cases at the instigation and with the co-operation of the high command. Nothing shows this more clearly than the unfortunate

attempt of the German authorities to defend themselves in their volume *Die völkerrechtswidrige Führung des Belgischen Volkskriegs*, for in this purely *ex parte* presentation the sworn depositions of the German soldiers proved the contrary of what was intended, and in addition the names of the German officers who gave the terrible orders are published officially. Nor were our own representatives in Belgium uninformed on what was taking place. Some reports must doubtless have reached Washington long before the return of Minister Whitlock. The following passage in his report to the Secretary of State made on September 12, 1917, is but a final confirmation of what we had already learned.

"Summary executions took place (at Dinant) without the least semblance of judgment. The names and number of the victims are not known, but they must be numerous. I have been unable to obtain precise details in this respect and the number of persons who have fled is unknown. Among the persons who were shot are: Mr. Defoin, mayor of Dinant; Sasserath, first alderman; Nimmer, age 70; consul for the Argentine Republic, Victor Poncelet, who was executed in the presence of his wife and seven children; Wasseige and his two sons;

Messrs. Gustave and Léon Nicaise, two very old men; Jules Monin and others were shot in the cellar of their brewery. Mr. Camille Pistte and son, age 17; Phillippart, Piedfort, his wife and daughter; Miss Marsigny. During the execution of about forty inhabitants of Dinant, the Germans placed before the condemned their wives and children. It is thus that Madame Albin who had just given birth to a child, three days previously, was brought on a mattress by German soldiers to witness the execution of her husband; her cries and supplications were so pressing that her husband's life was spared."

. . . . . .

"Tamines is a mining village in the Sambre; it is a collection of small cottages sheltering about 5,000 inhabitants, mostly all poor laborers.

"The little graveyard in which the church stands bears its mute testimony to the horror of the event. There are hundreds of new-made graves, each with its small wooden cross and its bit of flowers; the crosses are so closely huddled that there is scarcely room to walk between them. The crosses are alike and all bear the same date, the sinister date of August 22d, 1914.

"But whether their hands were cut off or not, whether they were impaled on bayonets or not, children were shot down, by military order, in cold blood. In the awful crime of the Rock of Bayard, there overlooking the

Meuse below Dinant, infants in their mother's arms were shot down without mercy. The deed, never surpassed in cruelty by any band of savages, is described by the Bishop of Namur himself:

" 'One scene surpasses in horror all others; it is the fusillade of the Rocher Bayard near Dinant. It appears to have been ordered by Colonel Meister. This fusillade made many victims among the near-by parishes, especially those of des Rivages and Neffe. It caused the death of nearly 90 persons, without distinction of age or sex. Among the victims were babies in arms, boys and girls, fathers and mothers of families, even old men.

" 'It was there that 12 children under the age of 6 perished from the fire of the executioners, 6 of them as they lay in their mothers' arms:

The child Fiévet, 3 weeks old.
Maurice Bétemps, 11 months old.
Nelly Pollet, 11 months old.
Gilda Genon, 18 months old.
Gilda Marchot, 2 years old.
Clara Struvay, 2 years and 6 months.

"'The pile of bodies comprised also many children from 6 to 14 years. Eight large families have entirely disappeared. Four have but one survivor. Those men that escaped death—and many of whom were riddled with bullets—were obliged to bury in a summary and hasty fashion their fathers, mothers, brothers, or

sisters; then after having been relieved of their money and being placed in chains they were sent to Cassel (Prussia).'"*

Where the shadows are so heavy it is hardly worth while to paint any darker isolated horrors like the brutal execution of Edith Cavell, which the American representatives tried to stay, or the murder of Captain Fryatt, for whom Ambassador Gerard attempted in vain to procure even the outward forms of justice.

But to have their rights as non-combatants trampled under foot, their houses looted, and their lives often sacrificed was not to be the end of the woe of the Belgians.

A new chapter was to be added, when in 1916 the German military authorities, who are the German power, ordered the wholesale deportation of Belgians and French working men, and often of women and girls. The account of one eye-witness must suffice, who describes merely what happened at Mons.

"I will take the 18th of November of last year (1916). A week or so before that a placard was placed on the walls telling my capital city

* *Cf.* "German War Practices," pp. 33, 34.

of Mons that in seven days all the men of that city who were not clergymen, who were not priests, who did not belong to the city council, would be deported.

"At half past five, in the gray of the morning of the 18th of November, they walked out, six thousand two hundred men at Mons, myself and another leading them down the cobblestones of the street and out where the rioting would be less than in the great city, with the soldiers on each side, with bayonets fixed, with the women held back.

"The degradation of it! The degradation of it as they walked into this great market square, where the pens were erected exactly as if they were cattle—all the great men of that province—the lawyers, the statesmen, the heads of the trades, the men that had made the capital of Hainaut glorious during the last twenty years.

"There they were collected; no question of who they were, whether they were busy or what they were doing, or what their position in life. 'Go to the right! Go to the left! Go to the right!' So they were turned to the one side or the other.

"Trains were standing there ready, steaming, to take them to Germany. You saw on the one side the one brother taken, the other brother left. A hasty embrace and they were separated and gone. You had here a man on his knees before a German officer, pleading and begging to take his old father's place; that

was all. The father went and the son stayed. They were packed in those trains that were waiting there.

"You saw the women in hundreds, with bundles in their hands, beseeching to be permitted to approach the trains, to give their men the last that they had in life between themselves and starvation—a small bundle of clothing to keep them warm on their way to Germany. You saw women approach with a bundle that had been purchased by the sale of the last of their household effects. Not one was allowed to approach to give her man the warm pair of stockings or the warm jacket, so there might be some chance of his reaching there. Off they went!"*

The same sad story was to be repeated throughout Belgium and northern France under conditions which were often worse. Minister Whitlock reported to our Secretary of State, November 28, 1916, that many men had been taken from the Province of Valenciennes. "They have been without food for sixty-three hours and have no blankets. Apparently they have been deprived of food in order to oblige them to work for the Germans."† Ambassador

* *Cf.* "German War Practices," pp. 70–71.
† *Cf.* "German War Practices," p. 76.

Gerard was at that time in the United States, and Mr. Grew who was chargé d'affaires took up the matter with the chancellor and Minister Whitlock, and representatives of other Powers were able to secure some lessening of the severity of the deportations. The American Government on December 5, 1916, through our representative at Berlin laid a formal protest before the German chancellor. Like protests were made by the Pope, the King of Spain, the government of Switzerland, and other neutrals. These were unavailing, though our own protest is interesting since it is made in the interest of "those humane principles of international practice which have long been accepted and followed by civilized nations." The words humane and humanity were now to appear repeatedly, and to be disregarded as often, in our protests to Berlin up to the time of our own entrance into the war.

The looting of houses by soldiers and deportations of whole sections of the population were to be followed by a systematic government exploitation according to a plan, which was designed for the deliberate purpose of crip-

pling manufacturing and industry in these countries in order to forestall future competition.*

"*August 17th.* We belong to the 7th Corps, 14th Infantry Division, Lieut.-General v. Fleck, Corps Commander v. Bulow.

"*August 19th.* Could not find regiment and remained with ammunition column. They, when we halted, plundered a villa; had a great deal of wine.

"*August 22nd.* Bivouac near Anderleus. Ravaged terribly, fed magnificently.

"*August 26th.* At 6 o'clock we went into bivouac. As always, the surrounding houses were immediately plundered. Found four rabbits, roasted. Dined magnificently. Plates, cups, knives and forks, glasses, etc.; eleven bottles champagne, four bottles wine, and six bottles liqueur were drunk.

"*August 27th.* At 6.30 marched out. Every one still provided with wine and champagne bottles.

"*August 28th.* Senkenteg (St. Quentin). Had to bivouac in the market-place. Emptied the houses; carried the beds on to the square and slept on them. Had our fill of coffee." (From diary of non-commissioned officer of the Reserve Klasse, 2d Regiment of Uhlans, Gardelegen, Altmark. Original German in Bryce, "Evidence and Documents," p. 260.)

* *Cf.* "German Treatment of Conquered Territory," p. 34.

Practically everything movable in Belgium was thus taken by looting, confiscation, or forced sale. The list of articles detailed in official ordinances for such confiscation or forced sale runs to six columns of a large octavo page. In addition all machinery for manufacturing that could be transported to Germany was taken, and where material like boilers which had been built into manufacturing plants could not be removed, they were rendered forever useless by being crushed and broken by special battering-rams designed to this end. We are left in no doubt as to the purpose of all this, for in February, 1917, Deputy Beumer took pride in making the following statement before the Prussian Diet.

"Anybody who knows the present state of things in Belgian industry will agree with me that it must take at least some years—assuming that Belgium is independent at all—before Belgium can even think of competing with us in the world market. And anybody who has travelled, as I have done, through the occupied districts of France, will agree with me that so much damage has been done to industrial property that no one need be a prophet in order to say that it will take more than ten years before

we need think of France as a competitor or of the re-establishment of French industry."*

The same purposes lay behind the systematic destruction and laying waste of a large and once rich section of France at the time of the Hindenburg retreat in the spring of 1917. Everything that could possibly be taken was taken. Everything that could be of any use to the sorely tried population was destroyed; fruit-trees were sawed down, farming implements collected and burned. Much of it could not possibly be claimed to bear the poor justification of military necessity. For descriptions, let us confine ourselves again to German witnesses, the first passage translated from the *Berliner Tageblatt* of March 26, 1917:

"Smouldering fires and smoke and stench; a rumble spreading from village to village—the mine charges are still doing their final work, which leaves nothing more to do.

"It is not so easy to scatter a whole village into brick-dust. There are hundreds of villages out there which were under fire for weeks on end, yet still showed a wall or two and an occasional roof. . . . But when our engineers get

* *Cf.* "German Treatment of Conquered Territory," p. 7.

to work on a village, our engineers! Then it goes into the air as if a mighty earthquake had caught it, it crumbles and breaks up and falls, and the last pitiful houses are knocked out by the *coup de grace.* And what a rubbish-heap there lies spread—bricks and clay and stones and timbers licked by the flames. Poor devil of a war-zone, seek you habitation elsewhere. Old-time farms with massive walls, vaulting, and any amount of resisting power—their walls were drilled scientifically, and the charges fired. Then the whole farm crumpled up, just as it was intended to do—half over the road which it was its business to bury, and the other half into the cracking cellars.

"Rubble, nothing but rubble, all this ancient village history, all these future prospects of modern peasant life. The fine broad yard sinks away with the cottage; the cottage burns quietly to ashes, and the remains of its clay walls yield to the first serious stroke of the battering-ram. The great farm buildings put up a defense—only to fly into the air, rain down again, and mingle themselves with their neighbors' misery in a field of ruins which once bore a name and paid a rent.

"Let them see it over there! Let them see it over there! This fearful naked war should be reflected in all the shop windows of the Boulevards. We have put distance between us and our enemies. It is a desert full of wretchedness. . . .

"Farewell, comrades of the Somme! The

earth which drank your blood is upheaved and torn asunder. It is made unfruitful, it is turned into a desert, and your graves are made free from the dwellings of men. Those who tread it, your desert, will be greeted by our shells."

The second is from the *Lokal Anzeiger*, of March 18, 1917:

"In the course of these last few months great stretches of French territory have been turned by us into a dead country. It varies in width from 10 to 12 or 15 kilometers (6¼ to 7½ or 8 miles) and extends along the whole of our new position, presenting a terrible barrier of desolation to any enemy hardy enough to advance against our new lines. No village or farm was left standing on this glacis, no road was left passable, no railway track or embankment was left in being. Where once were woods there are gaunt rows of stumps; the wells have been blown up, wires, cables, and pipe-lines destroyed. In front of our new position runs, like a gigantic ribbon, an empire of death."

It would be useless to continue the recital of unwarranted practices by Germans in Poland, or those permitted by the Germans to their allies, the Turks, in Armenia. The spirit in which the whole was done is sufficiently evident in the order issued by General Stenger, of the

58th German Brigade, on August 26, 1914, and which was testified to by numerous German prisoners taken from that brigade:

"After today no more prisoners will be taken. All prisoners are to be killed. Wounded, with or without arms, are to be killed. Even prisoners already grouped in convoys are to be killed. Let not a single living enemy remain behind us." *

If any of these practices were later modified it was done not out of any consideration for humanity or respect for signed conventions; any abatements noticeable were effected by the fear of neutral opinion or of reprisals on German prisoners. The spirit that dictated such orders was the Prussian war spirit.

All this had not been done against us except in the sense that it had been done against humanity and against those laws of war which through two centuries civilized nations had been trying to formulate and establish. As the truth began to come to us, it made neutrality of thought impossible, though our government continued to maintain a scrupulous neutrality

* Harding, "The Study of the Great War," p. 61.

of action. What had happened, however, had served very largely to undermine our faith in the good-will or legitimate intentions of the Imperial German Government. When, during this period and later, aggressive measures were taken against our own rights and privileges, we were naturally forced to interpret them in the light of what had taken place in Germany's relations with other nations. The change of sentiment that came over the American people is well epitomized by what happened in the case of Vernon Kellogg during his work with the Commission for Relief in Belgium, and which he gave in his statement to the American Committee on Public Information at the time of its investigation.*

"I went into Belgium and occupied France a neutral and I maintained while there a steadfastly neutral behavior. But I came out no neutral. I cannot conceive that any American enjoying an experience similar to mine could have come out a neutral. He would come out, as I came, with the ineradicable conviction that a people or a government which can do what the Germans did and are doing in Bel-

* *Cf.* "German War Practices," pp. 93–94.

The ruins of Louvain.

"The spirit that dictated such orders was the Prussian war spirit."

gium and France to-day must not be allowed, if there is power on earth to prevent it, to do this a moment longer than can be helped. And they must not be allowed ever to do it again.

"I went in also a hater of war, and I came out a more ardent hater of war. But, also, I came out with the ineradicable conviction, again, that the only way in which Germany under its present rule and in its present state of mind can be kept from doing what it has done is by force of arms. It can not be prevented by appeal, concession, or treaties. Hence, ardently as I hope that all war may cease, I hope that this war may not cease until Germany realizes that the civilized world simply will not allow such horrors as those for which Germany is responsible in Belgium and France to be any longer possible."

CHAPTER VI

THE *LUSITANIA*

THE first serious crisis in our relations with Germany was to arise as a result of her use of submarines against merchantmen. Germany had already been guilty, as we have seen, of gross violations of the rules of war on land. She had torn up her treaty with Belgium, she had in that country instituted for a time at least a reign of terror and, after having invaded it, contrary to the rules of war, refused to feed the Belgian civilians, though according to The Hague Conventions, which Germany had signed, it was the duty of the occupying Power to feed them as well as it fed its own soldiers.

The hard fate which she had forced upon the civilian population seemed to move neither her rulers nor her people. As a consequence the Belgians were in the winter of 1914–15 reduced to a condition bordering on starvation. The sufferings of this innocent country had made a particular appeal to neutral sym-

pathies, and America had, therefore, after considerable difficulty organized the Commission for Relief in Belgium. During the early months of this same year were to appear the more or less official investigations which testified to the conduct of the German invading force, which we have already considered.

Germany had already bombarded open towns like Scarborough and Yarmouth, in which numerous civilians had been killed, and had added another chapter to the horrors of war when on April 22, once more against the express stipulations of The Hague Conventions, she used poisonous gas at the Battle of Ypres. However, the offenses which she had committed on land we overlooked, even when brought officially to our attention, as they were when the Belgian Commission laid its grievances before the President. It is necessary to make this clear to all those who believe that we entered this war merely out of considerations of humanity. We paid no heed to such considerations until Germany directly threatened us and began to carry out violations of the rights of American citizens themselves,

rights recognized since the foundation of our republic, rights sanctioned by international law, and furthermore established in many cases by special treaty between ourselves and Prussia. We had refused to protest against the violation of the rights of European countries—it now became a question of our own rights. Would Germany prove more scrupulous on the seas, and would she exhibit there any regard for those principles of humanity which had failed to restrain her in her warfare in Europe?

We must first consider the situation which had been developed. England had been unprepared for any war on land, and therefore had no considerable army to throw into the fighting in Europe at the beginning of hostilities. She had, however, been rapidly recruiting and training forces at home, and in the early months of 1915 the time had come when these troops and their supplies were ready to be transported to France. Large quantities of munitions, as we have seen, were soon to come from America, and German trade had been cut off. For all these reasons, therefore, Germany was anxious

to adopt measures which would prevent this increase of strength from making itself felt, and also, if possible, to destroy England's control of the seas and to open German ports again to the German navy and to the merchant fleets of neutrals.

The simplest solution of her problem she saw in an extension of the use of submarines. She knew perfectly that this could not be done as she expected to do it, in conformity with international law, but, as Secretary Zimmermann assured Ambassador Gerard, she did not believe that neutral Powers would go to war because of these violations. Furthermore, she believed that this inhuman method of warfare would bring speedy success, and, as usual, she relied upon that success for her justification. Her decision, because of its shocking character, startled us at the time and struck us as something sudden. We must remember that it was not so, that she had calculated the chances and begun a considerable time before to prepare and increase her submarines and her bases. Von Tirpitz had given out an interview late in 1914, which indicated that the plans had been

matured. He merely desired to prepare American sentiment for what was coming.

On the 4th of February, 1915, Germany issued the following proclamation:

"1. The waters surrounding Great Britain and Ireland including the whole English channel are hereby declared to be war zone. On and after the 18th of February, 1915, every enemy merchant ship found in the said war zone will be destroyed without its being always possible to avert the dangers threatening the crews and passengers on that account.

"2. Even neutral ships are exposed to danger in the war zone as in view of the misuse of neutral flags ordered on January 31 by the British Government and of the accidents of naval war, it can not always be avoided to strike even neutral ships in attacks that are directed at enemy ships.

"3. Northward navigation around the Shetland Islands, in the eastern waters of the North Sea, and in a strip of not less than 30 miles width along the Netherlands coast is in no danger."*

This amazing document was communicated to our government accompanied by a memorandum respecting the "retaliatory measures

* *American Journal of International Law*, Special Supplement, July, 1915, p. 84.

which had been rendered necessary" by the methods employed by England. In effect, it amounted to a series of grave accusations against all neutrals including ourselves.

It began by saying that Great Britain's conduct of commercial warfare had been a mockery, complained of England's modification of the Declaration of London, her interpretation of contraband, her taking German reservists off neutral vessels, her establishing of a blockade not in accordance with law, and her attempt to starve Germany. It went on to say: "The neutral Powers have in the main acquiesced in the measures of the British Government; in particular they have not been successful in securing the release by the British Government of the German subjects and German merchandise illegally taken from their vessels. To a certain extent they have even contributed toward the execution of the measures adopted by England in defiance of the principle of the freedom of the seas by prohibiting the export and transit of goods destined for peaceable purposes in Germany, thus evidently yielding to pressure by England."

To make neutrals *participes criminis*, and to blame them for not having done what Germany by force of arms had been unable to do, represented a new departure in international law and a new aspect of German psychology.

She further explained her purposes as follows:

"To this end it will endeavor to destroy, after February 18 next, any merchant vessels of the enemy which present themselves at the seat of war above indicated, although it may not always be possible to avert the dangers which may menace persons and merchandise. Neutral powers are accordingly forewarned not to continue to entrust their crews, passengers, or merchandise to such vessels. Their attention is furthermore called to the fact that it is of urgency to recommend to their own vessels to steer clear of these waters. It is true that the German Navy has received instructions to abstain from all violence against neutral vessels recognizable as such; but in view of the hazards of war, and of the misuse of the neutral flag ordered by the British Government, it will not always be possible to prevent a neutral vessel from becoming the victim of an attack intended to be directed against a vessel of the enemy."*

* *American Journal of International Law*, Special Supplement, July, 1915, p. 85.

The flying of a neutral flag by a belligerent, fortunately or unfortunately, has always been permitted by the law of nations. The United States, when at war, has done so,* and the German Prize Ordinance of August 3, 1914, sanctioned this practice, and her men-of-war and her own raiders had used it.† Great Britain had employed the same *ruse de guerre*, and the captain of the *Lusitania*, on leaving England had, at the request of Americans aboard, hoisted

* On May 22, 1898, during the Spanish-American War, two American war-ships flying the Spanish flag put into Guantanamo Bay, in Cuba. The United States in the Naval War Code of June 27, 1900 (General Orders 551) forbade the use of false colors. American naval officers reported against the practice in 1903, though, "pending some international agreement" on the use of false colors, they felt that the United States would be at a disadvantage in accepting the action of 1900. This action was therefore revoked in February, 1904, and there has as yet been no international agreement.

† Article 82 of the German Prize Ordinance reads: "During a pursuit the war ensign need not be displayed, and the use of any merchant flag is permitted." Perels, the German author of "Das Internationale Öffentliche Seerecht der Gegenwart" (1903) says, "It is not to be regarded as forbidden in all circumstances," but holds that the proper flag must be displayed before going into action or exercising the right of visit and search (p. 182). Perels was the greatest German authority and counsellor to the German admiralty. His successor in this post, Schramm, in his "Das Prisenrecht in Seiner Neuesten Gestalt" (1913), holds (p. 294) according to the laws of war the regular war-ships are entitled to resort to war ruses, such, for instance, as the flying of a false national flag. It was certainly not the immorality of the procedure which distressed the Germans. The use of a false flag is forbidden in warfare on land. Yet Germany has repeatedly given her aeroplanes the insignia of her enemies, and has dressed her soldiers in their uniforms. A number of Germans dressed in French uniforms were killed by the Americans when the Germans crossed the Marne in July, 1918.

our flag. We as a government were in no wise responsible and, indeed, the German course was admitted to be an act of retaliation which might be justified if its effects were confined to the guilty enemy, but which, as a well-known authority has said, "was certainly not permissible against neutrals and will not, it is believed, be permissible until the distinction between guilt and innocence is destroyed."

To this communication, therefore, we replied on February 10, calling attention to the danger of such illegal policy if it should destroy an American vessel or cause the death of an American citizen. Our protest explained the right of belligerents in dealing with neutral vessels as follows:

"It is of course not necessary to remind the German Government that the sole right of a belligerent in dealing with neutral vessels on the high seas is limited to visit and search, unless a blockade is proclaimed and effectively maintained, which this Government does not understand to be proposed in this case. To declare or exercise a right to attack and destroy any vessel entering a prescribed area of the high seas without first certainly determining its belligerent nationality and the contraband

character of its cargo would be an act so unprecedented in naval warfare that this Government is reluctant to believe that the Imperial Government of Germany in this case contemplates it as possible. The suspicion that enemy ships are using neutral flags improperly can create no just presumption that all ships traversing a prescribed area are subject to the same suspicion. It is to determine exactly such questions that this Government understands the right of visit and search to have been recognized." *

We furthermore reminded Germany that we were open to none of the accusations which had been made against neutrals and concluded as follows:

"If such a deplorable situation should arise, the Imperial German Government can readily appreciate that the Government of the United States would be constrained to hold the Imperial German Government to a strict accountability for such acts of their naval authorities and to take any steps it might be necessary to take to safeguard American lives and property and to secure to American citizens the full enjoyment of their acknowledged rights on the high seas." †

* *American Journal of International Law*, Special Supplement, July, 1915, pp. 86–87.

† *Ibid.*, p. 87.

At the same time, however, though we were not bound to do so, we sent a note to Great Britain asking that it refrain from using the American flag. The speedy reply of the German Government, on February 16, indicated that they had considered all these points in advance of their decision, and it merely insisted again on its own innocence and the guilt of England, and cited the case of the *Wilhelmina*, in which an American vessel carrying grain to Germany was held up by the British and brought before a prize-court. Incidentally it might be said that we had already protested the *Wilhelmina* case, and it was no worse, indeed not so serious, a violation of our rights as Germany was guilty of when she sank the *William F. Frye* and her cargo, as we have already explained. The accusations against neutrals were repeated and a protest was added against our trade in munitions:

"The German Government have not in consequence made any charge of formal breach of neutrality. The German Government can not, however, do otherwise, especially in the interest of absolute clearness in the relations

between the two countries, than to emphasize that they, in common with the public opinion in Germany, feel themselves placed at a great disadvantage through the fact that the neutral powers have hitherto achieved no success or only an unmeaning success in their assertion of the right to trade with Germany, acknowledged to be legitimate by international law, whereas they make unlimited use of their right to tolerate trade in contraband with England and our other enemies. Conceded that it is the formal right of neutrals not to protect their legitimate trade with Germany and even to allow themselves knowingly and willingly to be induced by England to restrict such trade, it is on the other hand not less their good right, although unfortunately not exercised, to stop trade in contraband, especially the trade in arms, with Germany's enemies." *

It furthermore explained that it would plant mines and could not therefore be responsible for neutrals sunk in this way in the danger zone, and therefore suggested that "the safest method of doing this is to stay away from the area of maritime war. Neutral ships entering the closed waters in spite of this announcement, given so far in advance, and which seriously

* *American Journal of International Law*, Special Supplement, July, 1915, p. 92.

impair the accomplishment of the military purpose against England, bear their own responsibility for any unfortunate accidents. The German Government on their side expressly decline all responsibility for such accidents and their consequences." *

In addition it recommended that, if we entered the zone at all, "the United States convoy their ships carrying peaceful cargoes," though it could not, even so, guarantee us from the danger of mines.

These were indeed strange statements coming from a Power which claimed to be contending for the freedom of the seas.

The United States took this in better part than might have been expected, and in its sincere desire to clear up a situation so fraught with dangerous possibilities, on February 20 tried to effect an arrangement between the belligerents, but was unsuccessful. Germany refused to give up the mines and Great Britain then refused to make the concessions demanded of her. The whole situation is summed up in

* *American Journal of International Law*, Special Supplement, July, 1915, p. 93.

a declaration of the French Government communicated to us on March 30:

"Germany has declared the English Channel, the northern and western coasts of France, as well as the waters surrounding the British Isles to be a 'war zone,' and has officially proclaimed that 'all enemy vessels found in this zone will be destroyed and that neutral vessels there might be in danger.' This is in reality a claim to torpedo at sight, without regard for the safety of crew and passengers, any merchant vessel under any flag. As it is not in the power of the German Admiralty to maintain any vessel on the surface of these waters, this attack can only be carried out by submarine means. International law and the custom of nations regarding attack against commerce have always presumed that the first duty of the captor of a merchant vessel is to take it before a prize court where it can be judged, where the regularity of the capture can be determined, and where neutrals may recover their cargo. To sink a captured vessel is in itself a questionable act, to which recourse can be had only under extraordinary circumstances and after measures have been taken to assure the safety of all the crew and the passengers, if there are passengers on board. The responsibility of distinguishing between neutral and enemy cargo, as well as between neutral and enemy vessels, is manifestly incumbent on the attacking vessel,

whose duty it is to verify the status and the character of the vessel and its cargo, as well as to place all papers in safety, before sinking or even making a capture. Also the duty toward humanity consisting in assuring the safety of crews of merchant vessels, whether they are neutral or enemy, is an obligation for every belligerent. It is on this basis that all previous discussions of the law aiming at regulating the conduct of war at sea have been conducted."*

Up to this point of the war we had been compelled to protest to both England and Germany. The English violations, however, had been due to what we believed unwarranted extensions of existing rights, and it is safe to say that in no case had English violations caused or threatened the lives of Americans. Germany on her own admission was departing from international law and entering upon a policy which must necessarily either cut off recognized neutral rights to travel on the seas or result in the death of neutral citizens. Our country was, therefore, in a state of keen tension which increased when an American citizen was drowned in the sinking of the *Falaba*, when

* *American Journal of International Law*, Special Supplement, July, 1915, p. 116.

three more died as the result of the torpedoing of the *Gulflight*, and when the American vessel *Cushing*, plainly flying the American flag, was bombed by a German seaplane.

In spite of such premonitions the American people learned in horrified amazement that on May 7 the great passenger steamer *Lusitania* had been sunk with 1,959 people on board, without warning, ten miles off the Irish coast. To make sure of his work, the submarine captain had fired two torpedoes and the great liner sank rapidly. It was impossible for many of the passengers and crew to take to the boats, and as the ship settled and sank many of the boats which had been launched were broken or capsized.

Notwithstanding what had been reported of German conduct in Belgium and invaded France, very few Americans had believed that any soldier or sailor would ever have dreamed of carrying out in such fashion the threat which had been made by Germany. In consequence the vessel had carried a large number of women and children, and 1,182 non-combatants lost their lives. The scene was indescribable. After

twenty-five centuries Æschylus's sad phrase had become truth, "the very seas were flowering with the dead." To add to the pity of it all, there were among the lost, in spite of the chivalry of the passengers, 286 women and 94 children. For days the drowned who could be recovered from the boats or the sea were brought to the neighboring coast towns, while Americans anxiously scanned the lists for the names of friends to learn finally that 124 of our citizens, who had been guilty of no offense whatever, and were exercising a right accorded to all, had been murdered.

It is difficult to express the wave of feeling which passed through the American people, or to tell whether sorrow for the dead, horror at the deed, or righteous indignation against the perpetrators prevailed.

The least that can be said is that the act was universally condemned by the American and the neutral press and public. Perhaps fortunately, Congress was not in session, and Congress alone can declare war. Many believed that an extra session should have been immediately called for this purpose. In the mean-

time all sorts of suggestions were made: that we seize Germany's interned merchant and naval fleet, that we immediately sever diplomatic and commercial relations, that we refuse longer to safeguard Germany's interest in belligerent countries, that we mobilize the fleet and form a league of neutral nations. Had the President or his advisers had the slightest desire for war, the state of the country was such that it could undoubtedly have been declared. Nations had gone to war for far less, and we had announced that we would hold the German Government to "strict accountability."

The country was, however, held in check by the calmness and self-possession of the President who did not want war, had not wanted it, and was not to enter upon it until there was no possible alternative.

To understand the situation we must see for a moment how Germany took the news. It certainly came as no surprise to her rulers. A medal was struck off to commemorate this German success, and it is a curious fact that that medal bears the date not of May 7, but May 5. This may have been due to error of

the artist, but it is probable that it had been calculated that the *Lusitania* would be sunk on that date and that, with German thoroughness, the medal had been prepared in advance.

A Berlin despatch to the *Exchange Telegraph* via Amsterdam ran: "The Emperor drove to the Ministry of Marine to-day for a conference with Admiral von Tirpitz. The greatest enthusiasm was displayed here over the sinking of the *Lusitania*, demonstrations being held before the government buildings. The sinking of the *Lusitania* has made the Germans forget Italy." (Italy had just issued demands upon Austria which were to result in war.)

Count von Reventlow announced that:

"It is the American Government's own fault if it did not take Germany's war zone declaration seriously enough."

The *Kölnische Volkszeitung* of May 10, 1915, declared:

"The sinking of the *Lusitania* is a success for our submarines which must be placed beside the greatest achievements in the naval war. . . . The sinking of the great British steamer is a success the moral significance of

which is still greater than the material success. With joyful pride we contemplate this latest deed of our Navy, and it will not be the last."

The city of Magdeburg distinguished itself by proposing to honor the actual murderers. From that place, on May 19, came the news that a committee had been formed for the purpose of collecting money as a national gift for the officers and crew of the submarine which sent the *Lusitania* to the bottom and slaughtered so many defenseless men, women, and children of many nations.*

The German press which unanimously supported where it did not applaud its government laid the blame on England or upon America itself, and felt in any case that Germany had been completely justified by the fact that the following notice had appeared in the New York papers:

"NOTICE

"TRAVELERS intending to embark on the Atlantic voyage are reminded that a state of war exists between Germany and her allies and Great Britain and her allies; that the zone

* "Murder at Sea," by A. Hurd, p. 14.

of war includes the waters adjacent to the British Isles; that, in accordance with formal notice given by the Imperial German Government, vessels flying the flag of Great Britain, or of any of her allies, are liable to destruction in those waters and that travellers sailing in the war zone on ships of Great Britain or her allies do so at their own risk."

This was an astounding document to have issued from an embassy, for it amounted to a direct appeal on the part of a foreign ambassador from our government to the American people. In the previous negotiations we have seen that the President had refused to recognize the war zone proclaimed by Germany, and this procedure was parallel to that for which Citizen Genêt had been dismissed in the infancy of our republic. It was an affront direct. This notice had appeared the morning of the *Lusitania's* sailing and most Americans did not believe that it could be a *bona fide* communication from an ambassador. But it is no justification for murder, to have issued a warning and Germany's notice from the embassy did not excuse, it merely officially confirmed her guilt; it proved premeditation. When excited groups of reporters crowded

around the German ambassador, who was at that time in New York, and told him that as over one hundred Americans had been killed, the American people thought he ought to make a statement, Von Bernstorff shouted: "Let 'em think!" Bernard Dernburg further helped to excite public opinion by justifying the act; as a result of which he made himself impossible and either on his own motion or by request, returned to Germany. Secretary of War Garrison postponed his trip to Alabama and remained in Washington. No one seemed more deliberate or calm than the President, and on the following day he kept his engagement to deliver an address in Philadelphia. His attitude did much to relieve the tension and his first *Lusitania* note which was despatched on May 13, was received with general satisfaction by the country, which was determined that America should not be terrorized into submission. The basis of America's previous protests was repeated and the note concluded:

"The Government of the United States, therefore, desires to call the attention of the Imperial German Government with the ut-

most earnestness to the fact that the objection to their present method of attack against the trade of their enemies lies in the practical impossibility of employing submarines in the destruction of commerce without disregarding those rules of fairness, reason, justice, and humanity which all modern opinion regards as imperative. It is practically impossible for the officers of a submarine to visit a merchantman at sea and examine her papers and cargo. It is practically impossible for them to make a prize of her; and, if they cannot put a prize crew on board of her, they cannot sink her without leaving her crew and all on board of her to the mercy of the sea in her small boats. These facts, it is understood, the Imperial German Government frankly admit. We are informed that in the instances of which we have spoken time enough for even that poor measure of safety was not given, and in at least two of the cases cited not so much as a warning was received. Manifestly submarines cannot be used against merchantmen, as the last few weeks have shown, without an inevitable violation of many sacred principles of justice and humanity.

"American citizens act within their indisputable rights in taking their ships and in travelling wherever their legitimate business calls them upon the high seas, and exercise those rights in what should be the well-justified confidence that their lives will not be endangered by acts done in clear violation of uni-

versally acknowledged international obligations, and certainly in the confidence that their own Government will sustain them in the exercise of their rights.

"It (the United States Government) confidently expects, therefore, that the Imperial German Government will disavow the acts of which the Government of the United States complains, that they will make reparation so far as reparation is possible for injuries which are without measure, and that they will take immediate steps to prevent the recurrence of anything so obviously subversive of the principles of warfare for which the Imperial German Government have in the past so wisely and so firmly contended.

"The Imperial German Government will not expect the Government of the United States to omit any word or any act necessary to the performance of its sacred duty of maintaining the rights of the United States and its citizens and of safeguarding their free exercise and enjoyment."

In its reply the German Government failed to answer our note but attempted to make light of the case by alleging facts of which we were ignorant.

"The Government of the United States proceeds on the assumption that the *Lusitania*

is to be considered as an ordinary unarmed merchant vessel. The Imperial Government begs in this connection to point out that the *Lusitania* was one of the largest and fastest English commerce steamers, constructed with Government funds as auxiliary cruisers, and is expressly included in the navy list published by British Admiralty. It is moreover known to the Imperial Government from reliable information furnished by its officials and neutral passengers that for some time practically all the more valuable English merchant vessels have been provided with guns, ammunition, and other weapons, and reinforced with a crew specially practiced in manning guns. According to reports at hand here, the *Lusitania* when she left New York undoubtedly had guns on board which were mounted under decks and masked. . . . Lastly, the Imperial Government must specially point out that on her last trip the *Lusitania*, as on earlier occasions, had Canadian troops and munitions on board, including no less than 5,400 cases of ammunition destined for the destruction of brave German soldiers who are fulfilling with self-sacrifice and devotion their duty in the service of the Fatherland."

These statements were later proved untrue, though the German embassy hastened to procure a witness through Koenig, head of the Hamburg-American secret service, who swore

that he had been on the *Lusitania* before its departure and had seen guns there. His testimony had been fabricated, and Koenig and Bernstorff were probably aware of the fact, for the witness was later convicted of perjury when it was proved that he had not been on board the vessel; and the collector of the port who had inspected the *Lusitania* before her departure, testified that she had neither guns, ammunition nor troops aboard her.

For this reason our government forwarded a second note on June 9, which proved the German statements mistaken and insisted pressingly on the representations of the first note. It brought the discussion back sharply and pointedly to the main issue, in the following terms:

"Whatever be the other facts regarding the *Lusitania*, the principal fact is that a great steamer, primarily and chiefly a conveyance for passengers, and carrying more than a thousand souls who had no part or lot in the conduct of the war, was torpedoed and sunk without so much as a challenge or a warning, and that men, women, and children were sent to their death in circumstances unparalleled in

modern warfare. The fact that more than one hundred American citizens were among those who perished made it the duty of the Government of the United States to speak of these things and once more, with solemn emphasis, to call the attention of the Imperial German Government to the grave responsibility which the Government of the United States conceives that it has incurred in this tragic occurrence, and to the indisputable principle upon which that responsibility rests. The Government of the United States is contending for something much greater than mere rights of property or privileges of commerce. It is contending for nothing less high and sacred than the rights of humanity, which every Government honors itself in respecting and which no Government is justified in resigning on behalf of those under its care and authority. Only her actual resistance to capture or refusal to stop when ordered to do so for the purpose of visit could have afforded the commander of the submarine any justification for so much as putting the lives of those on board the ship in jeopardy."

On the occasion of the sending of this note, Secretary Bryan, who had signed our first communication, resigned from the cabinet, as he was not in sympathy with the method pursued, though future developments convinced the pub-

lic of the accuracy of his statement issued in explanation:

"The President and I agree in purpose; we desire a peaceful solution of the dispute which has arisen between the United States and Germany."

Germany's refusal to make immediate amends after this unparalleled offense would have made peace impossible had this not been the case, for in spite of the directness of our second communication, Berlin's answer of July 8 was rambling and not responsive. It insisted on the traditional friendliness of Germany to the American people; reasserted that she was waging a war of self-defense; and explained that the loss of life could hardly be chargeable to her. The reason for the rapid sinking of the vessel was due to circumstances of a very peculiar kind, especially "the presence on board of large quantities of highly explosive materials."

Her inability to understand the issue is perhaps nowhere more strikingly brought out than in the amazing statement that "the case of

the *Lusitania* shows with horrible clearness to what jeopardizing of human lives the manner of conducting war employed by our adversaries leads." One might imagine that the friendly German Government had been joining the United States in a protest against British inhumanity for killing a hundred Americans. It then proposed two methods by which Americans could pass through the danger zone, though none of these could have been accepted without surrendering the right for which we contended.

It was perfectly plain from the tenor of these two replies that the German party in power was committed to submarine warfare, and that if they spared Americans at all it would be through no considerations for humanity or international law.

The American rejoinder brought the case up again sharply and strongly:

"The Government of the United States is, however, keenly disappointed to find that the Imperial German Government regards itself as in large degree exempt from the obligation to observe these principles, even when neutral

vessels are concerned, by what it believes the policy and practice of the Government of Great Britain to be in the present war with regard to neutral commerce. The Imperial German Government will readily understand that the Government of the United States cannot discuss the policy of the Government of Great Britain with regard to neutral trade except with that Government itself, and that it must regard the conduct of other belligerent governments as irrelevant to any discussion with the Imperial German Government of what this Government regards as grave and unjustifiable violations of the rights of American citizens by German naval commanders. . . .

"If a belligerent cannot retaliate against an enemy without injuring the lives of neutrals, as well as their property, humanity, as well as justice and a due regard for the dignity of neutral powers, should dictate that the practice be discontinued. If persisted in it would in such circumstances constitute an unpardonable offense against the sovereignty of the neutral nation affected. . . . The rights of neutrals in time of war are based upon principle, not upon expediency, and the principles are immutable. It is the duty and obligation of belligerents to find a way to adapt the new circumstances to them.

"In view of the admission of illegality made by the Imperial Government when it pleaded the right of retaliation in defense of its acts, and in view of the manifest possibility of con-

forming to the established rules of naval warfare, the Government of the United States cannot believe that the Imperial Government will longer refrain from disavowing the wanton act of its naval commander in sinking the *Lusitania* or from offering reparation for the American lives lost, so far as reparation can be made for a needless destruction of human life by an illegal act. . . . Friendship itself prompts it to say to the Imperial Government that repetition by the commanders of German naval vessels of acts in contravention of those rights must be regarded by the Government of the United States, when they affect American citizens, as deliberately unfriendly."

This note, forceful and direct, admitted of no misinterpretation or evasion. After the despatch of our first protest a conversation between Secretary of State Bryan and Ambassador Dumba had been interpreted in such a way as to make the Central Powers assume that it had been written merely to satisfy American opinion. Any such view was now dispelled. The American position was very clearly outlined and the phrase "deliberately unfriendly" in diplomatic correspondence is not to be taken lightly. Until Germany's reply to this it would be taken for granted that the American posi-

tion was accepted and so the case stood for some time. The next step in the negotiations was reached when Von Bernstorff in a note on September 1, 1915, informed Secretary Lansing that he had received the following promise from his government: "Liners will not be sunk by our submarines without warning and with safety of the lives of the non-combatants, providing that the latter do not try to escape or offer resistance." Further discussions were conducted in Washington between Bernstorff and Secretary Lansing and finally Germany offered to pay an indemnity for the death of the Americans on the *Lusitania*, which she "greatly regretted," though she refused to disavow the action of the submarine commander or to admit that his act was illegal.

CHAPTER VII

THE *SUSSEX* AND THE SUBMARINES

THE promise made by the German Government on September 1, 1915, to the effect that Germany would not sink liners without saving the lives of passengers was unfortunately a characteristic German promise. It had already been broken before we knew that it had ever been made. For on August 19, the liner *Arabic* had been sunk without warning with the loss of sixteen lives, two of which were American, and Von Bernstorff had been naïve enough to explain that the promise recorded above had already been made by his government before this unfortunate incident. A still-born promise of this sort was not calculated to inspire much confidence, and the situation in America generally was well reflected in the statement of President Wilson on September 13, 1915, to a delegation of Virginians who asked him to visit the Manassas battle-field. "We are hoping and praying," said he, "that the

skies may clear, but we have no control of that on this side of the water, and it is impossible to predict any part of the course of affairs." In other words, the issue was with Germany. We were standing for the maintenance of our rights as neutrals and would continue to observe strict neutrality unless too grossly interfered with. But in spite of the gravity of the situation, which was to be further reflected in the President's addresses of the autumn, he was not willing to allow himself to be rushed off his feet. Nothing illustrates his patience with Germany nor his calmness more clearly than the waiting attitude which he pursued under repeated minor provocations, springing from Germany's submarine policy. We have seen that in the sinking of the *Arabic* two Americans were lost; in the case of the *Ancona*, November 10, eleven; in the case of the *Persia*, on December 30, two (one of them an American consular official). Besides these cases, in which lives were lost either as the result of German or Austrian torpedoing, there were numerous other cases which became the subject of diplomatic correspondence. Yet no new

issue was drawn and no crisis created, through the extreme forbearance of our government, which, after the strong and explicit language of the *Lusitania* note, was regarded by many Americans as undignified and unworthy of a great Power.

A new question was, however, to be raised with regard to the arming of merchantmen for defensive purposes. This right had always been conceded in international law, as we may judge from the following statement of Doctor Hans Wehberg, a German authority: "The enemy merchant ship has the right of defense against belligerent attack, and this right it can exercise against visit, for this indeed is the first act of capture. The attacked merchant ship can, indeed, itself seize the overpowered war-ship as a prize." *

This naturally implied the right of such vessels to arm, a right which had been given them in international law in order that they might defend themselves against pirates, and also in order that a swift yacht carrying a few men

**American Journal of International Law*, p. 871.

and mounting a gun might not capture great steamers and their crews. Such a rule of international law could not be changed, except by the agreement of all the belligerents, and our government attempted to bring about an abandonment of this right by all of them on condition that submarines sink no vessels save after visit and search. In this effort Washington was unsuccessful and therefore, naturally, firmly took its stand on the law which permitted such defensive armament. Germany early in 1916 announced that she would treat any enemy merchant ships bearing arms as ships of war. This was a clear violation of established principle in case merchant vessels carried a gun mounted aft for defensive purposes only. But in February, 1916, Representative McLemore introduced into Congress a resolution warning Americans not to travel upon any armed merchant ship lest they lose their lives and provoke a war. This was in direct contradiction of the ruling of the State Department, which had announced on February 15 that commercial vessels had the right to arm defensively. Those in favor of modifying

international law in the interest of Germany, however, supported this resolution, though the President had himself indicated his personal opposition to it on the ground that neutral subjects have a clear right to safe travel on a merchant vessel of a belligerent even though the ship is defensively armed. He was insisting, in other words, that no belligerent should cause the loss of American lives against the principles of international law. Certain political groups tried to make it appear that the country was not behind the President, and he therefore insisted that the matter be brought to a vote, and the resolution was tabled on March 7, 1916, by a majority of 276 to 152.

But scarcely had this question been settled than the lawlessness of German submarine practices was illustrated again in the case of the passenger-boat *Sussex*, which was entirely unarmed, mounting not even a signal-gun, and used on the English Channel route from Folkestone to Dieppe. She was carrying over four hundred passengers, including twenty-five American citizens, and was attacked on March 24 by a German submarine, about three o'clock

in the afternoon, killing or injuring eighty persons, two of whom were Americans. The questions involved were clear. They had all been covered in the *Lusitania* case, and the act was in evident violation of the German promises then made. It seemed that Germany was trying to discover whether America meant what she had said, and Germany had probably given her instructions to submarine commanders in the days when the McLemore resolution was still under discussion, and when a part of the American press was trying to prove that American sentiment was not behind the President.* This seems the more likely as Germany had given notice that after March 1 she would sink all armed enemy merchantmen without warning, and in the latter half of March a number of boats with Americans on board were torpedoed without warning, including the *Eagle Point*, the *Englishman*, and the *Manchester Engineer*. With regard to the *Sussex*, therefore, the State Department immediately directed an inquiry to Berlin to ascertain officially

* The part played by German propagandists in this connection will be discussed in Chapter VIII.

whether a German submarine had been responsible for the sinking. There was from the first no real doubt as to this question, since the torpedo had been observed as it approached the vessel and the captain had sharply turned the *Sussex* in an unsuccessful effort to avoid it. Ambassador Gerard had to make repeated requests before the Foreign Office finally procured from the admiralty on the 10th of April a report of the torpedoing. The report was of the disingenuous sort which we had unfortunately come to expect from the German Foreign Office. Its denial of having caused the sinking was so improbable as to seem grotesque in an official communication. The statement was designed to mislead, since the facts must have been known by the German navy, as the submarine had remained in the neighborhood after torpedoing the *Sussex* and had even attempted to sink another British vessel which was seeking to rescue a boat-load of the survivors. The denial was unavailing, however, for though the forward part of the *Sussex* had been blown off she stayed afloat long enough to be towed to Boulogne, and American naval officers de-

A number of boats with Americans on board were torpedoed without warning.

tailed to investigate discovered in the vessel unmistakable portions of the exploded German torpedo.

After establishing the facts in the case, Washington sent a note to Berlin, pointing out "that the Imperial Government has failed to appreciate the gravity of the situation which has resulted, not alone from the attack on the *Sussex* but from the whole method and character of submarine warfare, as disclosed by the unrestrained practice of commanders of German undersea craft during the past twelve months and more in the indiscriminating destruction of merchant vessels of all sorts, nationalities, and destinations." It continued to give a résumé of the deliberate and wholesale method of destruction which had become more and more unmistakable as the activities of German undersea vessels of war had in recent months been extended. It then reviewed the negotiations between the United States and Germany, and showed that the limitations which the Imperial Government had promised to put upon her submarine commanders had been regularly ignored, in a manner which the

United States could not but regard as wanton and without the slightest color of justification. "No limit," it continued, "of any kind has in fact been set to their indiscriminate pursuit and destroying of merchantmen of all kinds and nationalities," and "the roll of Americans who have lost their lives upon ships thus attacked and destroyed had grown from month to month until the ominous toll has mounted into the hundreds." The note then concluded in a tone and with statements that gave it the character of an ultimatum.

"The Government of the United States has been very patient. At every stage of this distressing experience of tragedy after tragedy it has sought to be governed by the most thoughtful consideration of the extraordinary circumstances of an unprecedented war and to be guided by sentiments of very genuine friendship for the people and Government of Germany. It has accepted the successive explanations and assurances of the Imperial Government as of course given in entire sincerity and good faith, and has hoped, even against hope, that it would prove to be possible for the Imperial Government so to order and control the acts of its naval commanders as to square its policy with the recognized principles of humanity as embodied

in the law of nations. It has made every allowance for unprecedented conditions and has been willing to wait until the facts became unmistakable and were susceptible of only one interpretation.

"It now owes it to a just regard for its own rights to say to the Imperial Government that that time has come. It has become painfully evident to it that the position which it took at the very outset is inevitable, namely, the use of submarines for the destruction of an enemy's commerce, is, of necessity, because of the very character of the vessels employed and the very methods of attack which their employment of course involves, utterly incompatible with the principles of humanity, the long-established and incontrovertible rights of neutrals, and the sacred immunities of non-combatants.

"If it is still the purpose of the Imperial Government to prosecute relentless and indiscriminate warfare against vessels of commerce by the use of submarines without regard to what the Government of the United States must consider the sacred and indisputable rules of international law and the universally recognized dictates of humanity, the Government of the United States is at last forced to the conclusion that there is but one course it can pursue. Unless the Imperial Government should now immediately declare and effect an abandonment of its present methods of submarine warfare against passenger and freight-carrying

vessels, the Government of the United States can have no choice but to sever diplomatic relations with the German Empire altogether. This action the Government of the United States contemplates with the greatest reluctance but feels constrained to take in behalf of humanity and the rights of neutral nations."*

The German reply of May 4, 1916, makes a painful impression. Germany had evidently been stung to the quick, for her tergiversating answer to our inquiry had failed to shake our certitude of her responsibility, and the plain statement of facts in our review of the situation amounted to a direct accusation of inhumanity and lawlessness. Her answer was, therefore, given in anger, not in sorrow. It included, in addition to paradoxical protestations of her entire innocence and of her humanity to non-combatants, accusations against the United States for failing to accept previous proposals of hers and especially accusations against British inhumanity and our own partiality to Britain. But it evidently recognized the gravity of the crisis and contained the following promises:

**American Journal of International Law*, Special Supplement, October, 1916, p. 190.

"The German Government, guided by this idea, notifies the Government of the United States that the German naval forces have received the following orders: In accordance with the general principles of visit and search and destruction of merchant vessels recognized by international law, such vessels, both within and without the area declared as naval war zone, shall not be sunk without warning and without saving human lives, unless these ships attempt to escape or offer resistance.

"But neutrals can not expect that Germany, forced to fight for her existence, shall, for the sake of neutral interest, restrict the use of an effective weapon if her enemy is permitted to continue to apply at will methods of warfare violating the rules of international law. Such a demand would be incompatible with the character of neutrality, and the German Government is convinced that the Government of the United States does not think of making such a demand, knowing that the Government of the United States has repeatedly declared that it is determined to restore the principle of the freedom of the seas, from whatever quarter it is violated." *

It will be seen that Germany, though making a definite promise not to sink merchantmen without warning or without saving human lives,

* *American Journal of International Law*, Special Supplement, October, 1916, pp. 198–199.

attempted to make this promise contingent upon some action on our part against Great Britain.

This would have made it possible for Germany to reopen the question in case negotiations between the United States and Great Britain were not settled to her satisfaction. Washington was, however, determined that this dangerous question should be settled finally and not conditionally. In the last paragraph of the American reply, therefore, this point was made an issue, and any such interpretation of the promise was specifically precluded. The communication was sent to Berlin on May 8, 1916, and read as follows:

"DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
WASHINGTON, May 8, 1916.

"You are instructed to deliver to the Minister of Foreign Affairs a communication textually as follows:

"'The note of the Imperial German Government under date of May 4, 1916, has received careful consideration by the Government of the United States. It is especially noted, as indicating the purpose of the Imperial Government as to the future, that it "is prepared to do its utmost to confine the operations of the war for the rest of its duration to the fighting forces of the belligerents," and that it is determined to impose upon all its commanders at sea the limi-

tations of the recognized rules of international law upon which the Government of the United States insisted. Throughout the months which have elapsed since the Imperial Government announced, on February 4, 1915, its submarine policy, now happily abandoned, the Government of the United States has been constantly guided and restrained by motives of friendship in its patient efforts to bring to an amicable settlement the critical questions arising from that policy. Accepting the Imperial Government's declaration of its abandonment of the policy which has so seriously menaced the good relations between the two countries, the Government of the United States will rely upon a scrupulous execution henceforth of the now altered policy of the Imperial Government, such as will remove the principal danger to an interruption of the good relations existing between the United States and Germany.

"'The Government of the United States feels it necessary to state that it takes it for granted that the Imperial German Government does not intend to imply that the maintenance of its newly announced policy is in any way contingent upon the course or result of diplomatic negotiations between the Government of the United States and any other belligerent Government, notwithstanding the fact that certain passages in the Imperial Government's note of the 4th instant might appear to be susceptible of that construction. In order, however, to avoid any possible misunderstanding, the Government of the United States notifies the Impe-

rial Government that it can not for a moment entertain, much less discuss, a suggestion that respect by German naval authorities for the rights of citizens of the United States upon the high seas should in any way or in the slightest degree be made contingent upon the conduct of any other Government affecting the rights of neutrals and noncombatants. Responsibility in such matters is single, not joint; absolute, not relative.'

"LANSING."*

'If Germany was unwilling to accept this interpretation it would be necessary for her to reopen the question. She did not do so and this, therefore, meant that she accepted the American position.

In spite of past experiences the United States accepted this promise in good faith. The spirit of fairness which was always manifested toward Germany was further illustrated in the ruling on the case of the *Deutschland*, the large commercial submarine which brought two cargoes of goods from Germany to American ports in this same year.

The Allied governments sent notes to the neutral powers stating that, in view of the fact that it was impossible to distinguish the na-

* *American Journal of International Law*, Special Supplement, October, 1916, pp. 199–200.

tionality of undersea boats or to determine whether they were armed or unarmed, belligerent submarine vessels, whatever the purpose to which they are put, be excluded from neutral waters, roadsteads, and ports. This would have excluded the *Deutschland* from our harbors. Instead of complying, Secretary Lansing ruled in favor of treating the submarine like any other vessel, since "the Government of the United States is at present not aware of any circumstances concerning the use of war or merchant submarines which have rendered the existing rules of international law inapplicable to them." Indeed, we made no protest, though many Americans felt we should have done so when, on October 7, the large *U*-53 came into the harbor at Newport, and a day later sank three British and two neutral steamers between sixty and one hundred miles from the shore. The submarine set the passengers, of whom many were Americans returning from Newfoundland, adrift in small boats, in which a number might have been lost but for the rescue work of the Newport destroyer flotilla. Here the situation was to rest without any further serious crisis until early in 1917.

CHAPTER VIII

GERMAN INTRIGUE

IN addition to Germany's inhumane conduct in Belgium and on the seas, there was yet another factor which contributed to discredit her in American eyes and to force America first to regard her with suspicion and later to distrust her in word and act. This third factor is in its nature more or less imponderable, and it is difficult to calculate its importance in our government's decisions. We may say that in general it was the result of that large category of underhand activities which were entered upon by German officials either for the purpose of deliberately deceiving or of unduly influencing us in favor of the German cause or government. In pursuing this policy of intrigue and espionage Germany did not hesitate to resort to means which were dishonorable and illegal, and in many cases involved such serious affronts to our sovereignty that in the past we had dis-

missed the representatives of foreign Powers for having countenanced or engaged in them.

In 1805, for instance, the Spanish minister at Washington, the Marquis of Casa Yrujo tampered with the American press, and attempted to bribe a Philadelphia editor to present the Spanish side of a controversy with the United States. Passports were issued to him and he was dismissed by the infant republic. Nor did we grow less jealous of our sovereign rights with age. During a political campaign the British ambassador, Lord Sackville-West, in reply to a letter, advised Americans of British birth to vote for Grover Cleveland. When, after the election, the incident came to light, President Cleveland characterized it in his annual message as, "unpardonable conduct," and explained that, "the offense thus committed was more grave, involving disastrous possibilities to the good relations of the United States and Great Britain, constituting a gross breach of diplomatic privilege and an invasion of the purely domestic affairs and essential sovereignty of the government to which the envoy was accredited."

President Cleveland, therefore, directed that passports be issued to Lord Sackville-West, and Secretary of State Bayard held that circumstances involving interference with American suffrage left no other course open to the United States.

In what follows it will be plain that the offenses committed by Lord Sackville-West and the Marquis of Casa Yrujo were the merest peccadillos compared with the systematic attempts of Germany to influence American suffrage and to disregard the sovereign rights of our government.

The field covered by this underhand activity was so large and the means employed so varied that to treat it in all its phases would demand separate volumes. It was furthermore in many cases so cleverly concealed that much of it has not yet come to light, and more than a year after our entrance into the war the trials and confessions of prisoners and suspected persons disclose almost daily further ramifications of this organized secret plotting.* Thus, for instance, on July 11, 1918, at the investigation in New York when Senator King demanded

* *Cf.* the files of the New York *Times* for July, 1918.

that the government conduct an investigation into the report that $30,000,000 had been used in that city for purchasing newspapers and spreading propaganda, Deputy Attorney-General Becker made the statement that not only this sum but "untold millions," had been put at the disposal of the German agents as a "slush fund." He further announced that at least sixteen New York banks had acted as depositaries for German funds, and that an investigation was pending to discover how the amounts drawn from these accounts by Ambassador von Bernstorff and his aides had been employed.

We are forced to restrict ourselves, therefore, to noting merely some of the characteristic aspects of this wide-spread plot, and in doing so we shall confine ourselves to cases that have been proven by documentary evidence now in the possession of the government. Many of them have been drawn from the careful analysis of the earlier activities of German agents prepared by Professors Sperry and West.* In no cases shall we deal with the ac-

* "German Plots and Intrigue in the United States during the Period of our Neutrality." Committee on Public Information, Washington.

tivity, even the treasonable acitivity, of isolated and overzealous German sympathizers. Every instance which follows was undertaken at the suggestion or with the knowledge and connivance, often the direct collaboration of German Government officials. Where funds were necessary they were provided by them.

The "commander-in-chief" of this organization was Count von Bernstorff, the German ambassador. Until his dismissal Doctor Dumba, the Austro-Hungarian ambassador was his coadjutor, and his chief lieutenants were Captain von Papen, military attaché, and Captain Boy-Ed, naval attaché of the German embassy. They were assisted by Doctor Albert, the commerical attaché and Wolf von Igel, secretary to Von Papen, all of them enjoying diplomatic status and diplomatic immunity. Under them served most of the German and Austrian consuls in this country, a large number of German reservists, hired American journalists, and an odd collection of agitators and desperadoes drawn often from the lowest classes.

The following recital of what was done and the methods employed will be sufficient to show

the lack of honor and conscience of the German Government. We have already considered the character of German political morality. It need occasion no astonishment, therefore, if a few selected messages and documents prove that this whole underhand system of violence and deceit was merely an extension of the work of the German Foreign Office and the General Staff.

On November 2, 1914, a circular order was issued from the German General Headquarters, "to the military representative on the Russian and French fronts, as well as in Italy and Norway," and it is not improbable that one to the same purport was sent to America. It read:

"In all branch establishments of German banking houses in Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, China, and the United States, special military accounts have been opened for special war necessities. Main headquarters authorizes you to use these credits to an unlimited extent for the purpose of destroying factories, workshops, camps, and the most important centres of military and civil supply belonging to the enemy. In addition to the incitement of labor troubles, measures must be taken for the damag-

ing of engines and machinery plants, the destruction of vessels carrying war material to enemy countries, the burning of stocks of raw materials and finished goods, and the depriving of large industrial centres of electric power, fuel, and food. Special agents, who will be placed at your disposal, will supply you with the necessary means for effecting explosions and fires, as well as with a list of people in the country under your supervision who are willing to undertake the task of destruction.

"(Signed) Dr. E. Fischer."

So general an order, if sent to America, was, however, not sufficient. More definite instructions on the various phases of the work were from time to time forwarded from Berlin to Von Bernstorff. A few sample messages which in one way or another came into our hands will establish the fact. The following are copies of two telegrams sent to the German ambassador:

"Jan. 3 (1916). (Secret.) General Staff desires energetic action in regard to proposed destruction of Canadian Pacific Railway at several points with a view to complete and protracted interruption of traffic. Captain Boehm, who is known on your side and shortly

returning, has been given instructions. Inform the Military Attaché and provide the necessary funds.

"(Signed) ZIMMERMANN."

"Jan. 26 (1916). For Military Attaché. You can obtain particulars as to persons suitable for carrying on sabotage in the United States and Canada from the following persons: (1) Joseph McGarrity, Philadelphia, Penn. (2) John P. Keating, Michigan Avenue, Chicago. (3) Jeremiah O'Leary, 16 Park Row, New York. One and two are absolutely reliable and discreet. No. 3 is reliable, but not always discreet. These persons were indicated by Sir Roger Casement. In the United States sabotage can be carried out on every kind of factory for supplying munitions of war. Railway embankments and bridges must not be touched. Embassy must in no circumstances be compromised. Similar precautions must be taken in regard to Irish pro-German propaganda.

"(Signed) REPRESENTATIVE OF GENERAL STAFF."

One of the many violations of our neutrality by Germany was her attempt to start military expeditions against her enemies from America. These plans likewise were directed from Berlin through Von Bernstorff, as is evi-

dent from the following telegram regarding the status of the organizer of the projected revolt in India:

"BERLIN, 4th February, 1916.

"*To the German Embassy, Washington:*

"In the future all Indian affairs are to be handled through the Committee to be formed by Dr. Chakraberty. Dhirenda Sarkar and Heramba Lal Gupta who has meanwhile been expelled from Japan, will cease to be independent representatives of the Indian Independence Committee existing here.

"ZIMMERMANN."

There can, therefore, be no doubt that this plot, as President Wilson subsequently said of the German plot generally, "had its heart in Berlin." Like a gigantic octopus it sprawled over our entire country and stretched out its tentacles into every form of our national life. It touched our Congress, our diplomacy, our industry, our press. Indeed so multiform and all-pervasive was it that if we merely sketch a few of its more pronounced phases, it must be understood that they all worked in together

and were designed to nullify our neutrality, our national will, indeed our sovereignty.

These attacks upon us through German underhand diplomacy may be said to have been made along five converging lines. In the first place, they sought through various channels to pervert American opinion and legislation to German ends by the employment of immense sums of money. In the second, they sought to give illegal military aid to Germany directly. In the third place, they attempted to use the United States as a base for German military operations. In the fourth place, they attempted to interfere with American industries, especially the manufacture of munitions and their transportation on land and water in order to prevent our resources from being of value to the Allies. In the fifth place, to crown their structure of intrigue they elaborated a system of underhand diplomacy through which they hoped to foment trouble between America and the Allies generally, and particularly to embroil the United States in a war with Mexico and Japan.

This pyramid of plot and intrigue had as its base a wide-spread plan to poison public

opinion* in which probably not less than $50,000,000 was spent through Ambassador von Bernstorff, Doctor Dernburg, the former German Colonial Secretary, and their aides. In addition to their German assistants there were employed a number of American journalists, correspondents, and lecturers like Doctor William Bayard Hale, Mr. J. F. J. Archibald, to whom at least one check for $5,000 was given for "propaganda work," and Edwin Emerson, who received $1,000 for "travelling expenses," and many others. Not content with this, however, they bought up and subsidized newspapers throughout the land. It is difficult to follow all of their activities in connection with the foreign-language press already existing in this country, or to know in how many cases they succeeded in bribing editors of our journals in English. Their general procedure is indi-

* That the German Government had for many years been employing debatable methods in this regard is painfully evident in the account by Witte, attached for a time, when he was supposed to be only a foreign correspondent, as publicity agent to the German Embassy (1902). His book was written as an attack upon Holleben, and is evidently controversial and the work of a mind diseased. This portion of it must be taken with serious reservations. The account of the means and instruments employed to influence American opinion is incidental, and this, with documents cited, is sufficient to arouse astonishment. (*Aus Einer Deutschen Botschaft*, Leipzig, 1907.)

cated, however, by the check for $5,000 which Count von Bernstorff sent to Marcus Brown, editor of *Fair Play*,* the monthly subsidy of $1,750 delivered to Mr. George Sylvester Viereck, editor of *The Fatherland*, by the commercial attaché Albert, and the similar monthly subsidy of $1,500 paid to the *American Independent*, by Consul-General Bopp of San Francisco. Of the newspapers bought outright by the German Government, and continued ostensibly as American organs of opinion, the most important was the *Evening Mail* of New York, for which about $1,500,000 of a seemingly inexhaustible fund was spent.

To assist in this attempt at perverting American opinion there were founded or encouraged societies, seemingly American, to influence sentiment and legislation. The most important of these was perhaps the *German-American National Alliance*, which had already been in existence for the purpose of spreading German influence in America, and which they sought

* It has recently (August, 1918) become evident that, in addition to the check paid to the editor, the German ambassador purchased the stock of *Fair Play*, financially a losing venture, for $15,000, through an American intermediary. (*Cf.* New York *Times* files for August, 1918.)

to make a power in politics.* A second, founded for the more immediate purpose of influencing Congress was *Labor's National Peace Council*, which was financed by Emperor Wilhelm's friend and personal agent, Franz von Rintelen. A third was the *American Embargo Conference*, which was established to make a determined and concerted effort to prevent the export of munitions after our government had decided that this was entirely proper within the limits of our neutrality. Another means employed by the *Embargo Conference* was that of distributing to voters over 5,000,000 telegrams to

* A striking change in Germany's attitude toward Germans who had emigrated to America is noticeable after about 1900, at the time when the Pan-German movement began to gain momentum. Earlier they had frequently been treated as renegades. After this period, particularly after Prince Henry's visit in 1902, every attempt was made to strengthen their loyalty to the fatherland. The promotion of societies among them was encouraged, and flags were often presented to the American societies of German veterans, *Landwehr-Vereine*, by the German Emperor through his ambassador. (*Cf. Aus Einer Deutschen Botschaft*, by Emil Witte, Leipzig, 1907, chap. VII). The teaching of German in American schools was pushed and German-language papers encouraged and, it would seem, subsidized. The leaders of the German-American movement frequently received decorations from Berlin. In his "Life of John Hay," vol. II, p. 290, Thayer says, and we think very truly: "Prince Henry's visit, however, was really intended to solidify the German-American movement in behalf of the Fatherland." The political purpose of the movement is plainer now than it was then, though Doctor von Holleben, German ambassador at that time, was bold enough to say to a reporter: "Any war between Germany and the United States would be in the character of a civil war." (*Cf.* Witte, *Aus Einer Deutschen Botschaft*, chap. II.)

be sent to Congress demanding an embargo on munitions. On a single day 250,000 identical messages poured into Washington, and in Chicago alone the *Conference* paid the telegraph companies about $20,000.

That the results were satisfactory to the German Government is evident from Count von Bernstorff's telegram of September 16, 1916, to the German Foreign Office: "The *Embargo Conference*, in regard to whose earlier fruitful co-operation Dr. Hale can give information, is just about to enter upon a vigorous campaign to secure a majority in both houses of Congress favorable to Germany and request further support. There is no possibility of our being compromised. Request telegraphic reply." This organization functioned to the very last months of the period of our neutrality and later Count von Bernstorff was again to telegraph Berlin for further sums to be spent on this and similar organizations which aimed to force pro-German policies through Congress.

"I request authority to pay out up to $50,000 (fifty thousand dollars) in order, as on former occasions to influence Congress through the

organization you know of, which can perhaps prevent war.

"I am beginning in the meantime to act accordingly.

"In the above circumstances a public official German declaration in favor of Ireland is highly desirable, in order to gain the support of the Irish influence here."

There is at present no doubt that actual bribery of Congress was intended by Franz von Rintelen, and it is very possible that the same was true in the case of Count von Bernstorff and his society. Both Congressman Buchanan, who was the president of *Labor's National Peace Council*, and Ex-Congressman Fowler received money for their assistance in attempting to bribe Congress.* Money was also advanced according to the testimony of Meloy to Lamar, "the Wolf of Wall Street,"† to be used in procuring the passage of resolutions by Congress which should embarrass the government in the conduct of its relations with Germany. In addition to their purposes in influencing public opinion and legislation these and like societies were also used for other ends which do not concern us here.

* *German Plots and Intrigues.* Issued by Committee on Public Information, p. 16.

† *Ibid.*

The second phase of German intrigue we have described is the attempt to give illegal military assistance to Germany, and the effort to do this assumed likewise various forms. We can deal with only two that are characteristic. Immediately after our entry into the war the German Government, through the Hamburg-American Line and its officials in New York, endeavored to send coal and other supplies to German war-ships which were raiding commerce along both our coasts. Such action was a violation of American neutrality, and in order to evade the law the German agents detailed to this work took false oaths before Federal authorities concerning the nature, destination, and cargoes of their vessels. In addition to the aid and comfort given to Germany in this matter the plan was also aimed at causing friction between the United States and the countries with which it was at peace. Some of those implicated were convicted in December, 1915, of conspiracy to defraud the United States. The evidence at the trial proved that fraud and perjury were here, as in every phase of this German activity, committed under the direc-

tion of officials protected by the diplomatic privileges held sacred by other nations. Though the results were meagre, the copy of Captain Boy-Ed's account at a New York bank indicates that he paid the Hamburg-American Line more than $3,000,000 for furthering Germany's naval operations from the United States.

One of the phases of these efforts to give Germany direct military aid is more interesting than some, since it has its amusing side. In their eager desire to send troops and munitions to the Central Empires the German Embassy and its group of plotters overreached themselves very early in the game, and all the stages of their procedure were from the beginning known to our Department of Justice. In order to send German reservists abroad it was necessary that they be provided with American passports, and with true German efficiency, therefore, an office was established in New York through the German Embassy and directed by Captain von Papen, military attaché, where American passports were forged by wholesale. German consuls in distant cities like Chicago

and St. Paul were informed concerning this office and sent the reservists from their localities to the given address to be supplied. The operations were developed on so large a scale that the busy conspirators did not therefore notice the "infiltration" of a member of the United States Secret Service. They evidently believed that the United States, which submitted to much more serious offenses, would not object, and, unfortunately, this belief in our indulgence was not misplaced.

We have seen in the chapter on "Strict Neutrality" that as early as January 20, 1915, the Secretary of State had called attention to the fact that persons of German nationality, under pretense of being American citizens, had obtained American passports for the purpose of returning to Germany without molestation by her enemies, and that "there are indications that a systematic plan" had been devised to obtain American passports through fraud for the purpose of securing passage for German officers and reservists desiring to return to Germany, "and that such fraudulent use of passports by Germans can have no other effect than

to cast suspicion upon American passports in general." We have seen also that instead of taking any action against the German Embassy, which was discrediting American passports, our government merely made new regulations, and hoped that "this would prevent any further misuse of American passports."*

The "indications" that a systematic plan was on foot were plain indeed. Hans von Wedell, who had managed it under Captain von Papen, took alarm and fled in November, 1914, with money supplied by his employer. There could have been no doubt as to the complicity of the German Embassy in the business, for the following letter from Von Wedell was in the possession of our secret service:

"*His Excellency, the Imperial German Ambassador, Count von Bernstorff,*
Washington, D. C.:

" . . . My work was done. At my departure, I left the service well organized, and

* What discredit had been thrown upon all American passports by this counterfeiting is readily apparent. We give but a single instance. Mr. Arthur Gleason, a former correspondent and worker for the Red Cross, writes as follows:

"In October, 1914, two miles outside Ostend, I was arrested as a spy by the Belgians, and marched through the streets in front of a gun in the hands of a very young and very nervous soldier. The État-Major

worked out in minute detail, in the hands of my successor, Mr. Karl Ruroede, picked out by myself. . . . Also, Ruroede will testify to you that without my preliminary labors it would be impossible for him, as well as for Mr. von Papen, to forward officers in any way whatever. . . . Ten days before my departure I learned from a telegram sent me by Mr. von Papen . . . that Dr. Starck had fallen into the hands of the British. That gentleman's forged papers were liable to come back and could . . . be traced to me. Mr. von Papen had repeatedly and urgently ordered me to hide myself. Mr. Igel told me that I was taking the matter altogether too lightly, and that I ought, for God's sake, to disappear. . . .

"With expressions of the most exquisite consideration, I am your Excellency's,

"Very respectfully,

"(Signed) HANS ADAM VON WEDELL."

Hans von Wedell had in the words of the song gone and ta'en his wages (we know that in one month Von Papen had advanced to him nearly $3,000), but the office under his successor Ruroede functioned and prospered, for he was

told me that German officers had been using American passports to enter the allied lines, and learn the number and disposition of troops. They had to arrest Americans on sight, and find out if they were masqueraders. A little later one of our American ambassadors verified this by saying to me that American passports had been flagrantly abused." ("Golden Facts," by Arthur Gleason, p. 25.)

now assisted by one of our own secret-service men who had entered his employ, and was watched by others. The connection of the office with Von Papen and the German Embassy, and all the details of its operation and the sources of its funds were known to these detectives. On January 2, the diligent Ruroede provided American passports for four German reservists. He had obtained them from the United States secret-service man. He put his four German reservists on board the Norwegian steamer *Bergensfjord*, but as the big liner dropped down the bay she was followed by a United States revenue cutter. At quarantine federal officers boarded the steamer, arrested the reservists and brought them back to New York. The chain of evidence was complete. The complicity of the German Embassy was evident, but at the time action was only taken against Ruroede, and the German Embassy and the restless Von Papen were allowed to employ their talents elsewhere, and quite naturally the captain came to the conclusion that the Yankees were "idiotic." In this fashion not only were reservists sent abroad, but American

passports were procured which were used by German spies in Europe and in England.

We have seen that the third line of policy pursued by the German representatives in this country was directed toward using the United States as a basis for hostile operations. These were directed particularly against India, Ireland, and Canada. In this regard they were very active, though their success can hardly be called brilliant. The attempt to start a revolt in India was begun even before the declaration of war in 1914, and the German agents working with Hindoo revolutionists started operations in San Francisco, where the plotting was carried out under the direction of the German Consul Franz Bopp. With his assistants (they included Captain von Papen and Wolf von Igel) he was finally convicted in the federal court of San Francisco, in March, 1918, for "felonious conspiracy to set on foot a military enterprise to be carried on within the territory of the United States against India." The ramifications of this plot were almost innumerable, and the amount of fraud and deceit required in prosecuting it through its various stages

would have given pause to any other government. The telegram already quoted from Foreign Secretary Zimmermann to Count von Bernstorff shows that it was initiated at Berlin, and that its strands passed through our embassy. Agents were employed in Switzerland and in all sections of our country, though particularly in Chicago and San Francisco. Large sums were spent in propaganda among the Hindoos in the United States, and bribery was very frequently resorted to. Arms and ammunition were purchased and vessels like the *Annie Larsen* and the *Maverick* were chartered to carry them, and, of course, in order to have them cleared, false manifests were issued. When through the failure of some of the complicated arrangements part of these stores of arms and ammunition was landed at Hoquiam, Washington, Ambassador Bernstorff had the effrontery to request that they be turned over to the German consul at Seattle. While plans for supplying the projected Hindoo insurrectionists with arms and men were being carried out from San Francisco, a group of conspirators in Chicago under German leadership

and financed by German money from the German Embassy was planning a simultaneous invasion of India from Siam. Various substations in the plot were established at Hawaii, Manila, and Bangkok. The extent of the plot may be gathered from the fact that in various parts of the country, and especially in San Francisco, well over a hundred German agents with their Hindoo fellow conspirators were indicted, and most of them convicted.

If the Indian plot for all the sums* and ingenuity expended upon it proved a fiasco, much the same was true of the attempt to establish co-operation in America with the Irish Revolutionists. The failure was not due, however, to any unwillingness on the part of the imperial German ambassador to give unstinted aid in these underhand and felonious projects, which included the shipment of arms and supplies from America, and the telegrams from the "Military Information Bureau" in New York to Von Bernstorff sent in April, 1916, before Sir Roger Casement's blundering expedition,

* Chakraberty on the witness-stand admitted having received from Wolf von Igel alone $60,000.

leave no question as to the embassy's complicity in the matter.

The aid given by Canada to Great Britain in the struggle against Germany early became a thorn in the side of Germany's representatives in this country, and they decided to take measures against the Dominion, using the United States as their base of operations. Their plans contemplated not only the crippling of Canadian commerce and industry by blowing up bridges, tunnels, canals, and manufacturing establishments, but even the carrying of the war into Canada.

In February, 1915, Werner Horn, a German lieutenant, was ordered by Captain von Papen to blow up the Grand Trunk Railway bridge where it crosses from Vanceboro, Maine, into Canada. Von Papen supplied him with $700, and Horn was arrested after he had caused the explosion, was found guilty, and sentenced. Horn's adventure, however, was merely to have been a minor episode in a plot so extensive that it included the blowing up of the tunnels and bridges on the Canadian Pacific Railroad, the locks at Sault Ste. Marie, the tunnels from Port Huron to Sarnia under the St. Clair River,

the Welland Canal and important railroad junctions. Conspirators were sent out to do this by German consuls in various parts of the country, notably San Francisco and Chicago, and directly from New York by Von Papen. Enumeration of the various attempts made and of the tools hired by German agents or German-American sympathizers at the instigation of German officials would be monotonous. A single instance must suffice.

Captain von Papen picked as one of his collaborators a German citizen, Von der Goltz. It was decided that he should blow up the Welland Canal, the grain-elevators at Fort William, and if possible the Sault Ste. Marie locks and railroad bridges. At the German Club in New York Von Papen supplied him with the necessary fuses, wires, and generators, and made arrangements through which he should be supplied with dynamite by Captain Hans Tauscher. He was further provided with funds by Von Papen, some of them in the form of a check on the Riggs National Bank at Washington (where the German Embassy had its deposits), and started for Buffalo with suitcases containing 100 pounds of dynamite. In Buffalo his

difficulties began when an American confederate of Von Papen's failed to deliver the latter's telegraphic instructions. After Von der Goltz had compromised himself, Von Papen, under an assumed name (Steffens), telegraphed his Buffalo agent: "Please instruct Taylor (Von der Goltz) cannot do anything more for him." He did, however, promise to arrange with Ambassador Bernstorff for Von der Goltz's departure, and the arrangement was carried out, as the following receipt will show:

"NEW YORK, October 1, 1914.
"I acknowledge the receipt of $150.00 with the obligation of using the amount for a voyage to Germany.
"(Berlin General Staff.)
"H. VON DER GOLTZ."

The stubs of Von Papen's check-book show that Von der Goltz had received from the German Embassy or its military attaché about $1,800.

Unlike Von der Goltz, many of the conspirators, like those sent out from the San Francisco or Chicago consulates or by Albert Kaltschmidt in Detroit, succeeded in entering Canada and in some cases in causing more or less important explosions. It can be readily imagined that

the moral character of some of the agents employed was not very high, and yet some of them when it came to the sticking-point shrank from the wanton destruction of life involved in the tasks set them, as, for instance, when Kaltschmidt hired Respa to blow up the Windsor Armory, which was filled with soldiers. Respa planted thirty sticks of dynamite as he had been instructed to do, but before leaving, realizing that if his bomb exploded it would blow up the armory and "kill every man in it," he deliberately fixed the bomb so that it would not explode. Some of Kaltschmidt's other attempts, were, however, more successful. Kaltschmidt was from the first liberally supplied with German funds by Von Papen's secretary, Wolf von Igel; but the complicity of the German Embassy in the plot is proved beyond question by the following note from Albert, the commercial attaché of the German Embassy:

"H. F. ALBERT, 45 BROADWAY,
"NEW YORK, Oct. 4, 1915.

"*Chase National Bank, 57 Broadway, New York City:*

"*Gentlemen:*—Please deposit with Knauth, Nachod and Kuhne, New York, $25,000 (twenty-five thousand dollars) for account of Mr. Kalt-

schmidt, Detroit, and charge a like amount to my joint account with J. Bernstorff.

"Yours very truly,

"HEINRICH F. ALBERT."

At the same time that these attempts to cripple Canada were being made, Von Papen and Boy-Ed had devised a plan which they discussed with German reservists, and according to which they were to seize on the west coast of Canada, a spot where they could land German troops with the aid of German raiders. The reservists in the United States were to be sent to other neutral territory (probably Mexico), where they would be embarked. It was believed that this would, in the testimony of one of the confederates,

"(1) Prevent the Canadian contingents then under training from sailing for Europe.

"(2) Prevent Canada from supplying England with necessaries on account of their being needed in the country itself.

"(3) Bring matters in the United States to a decision, the Government being forced either to supply both parties with arms and ammunition, or to prohibit the export of these articles altogether."

This ambitious project, which had been elaborated in the early months of the war, finally met with objection on the part of Von Bernstorff, who either feared that Canada had become too strong for them, or that the plan would involve them too openly with our government.

But it was not only against Great Britain and her allies that the German representatives in this country plotted and acted. Having failed in their attempts to send aid directly to Germany or to cause any serious trouble in the British colonies, they next turned their attention to rendering the United States impotent by interfering with our manufactures and destroying our commerce. That these plans were made with the full knowledge, and possibly at the suggestion of Germany's ambassador, is plain from the following communication:

"IMPERIAL GERMAN EMBASSY,
"WASHINGTON, Nov. 4, 1916.

"I hereby permit myself to recommend to you most warmly Dr. Karl O. Bertling, Direktor of the Amerika-Institute in Berlin. Dr. Bertling will take the liberty to lay before you some matters pertaining to the activity of the

Central Bureau for German and Austro-Hungarian workmen. This work as well as the collection of funds for its further extension are worthy of all sympathy.

"Dr. Bertling is authorized to receive contributions in any amount. Checks are to be made payable to Hans Liebau, Treasurer.

"Yours with special respect,

"(Signed) J. VON BERNSTORFF."

The purpose of this bureau is suggested in the following extract from Liebau's monthly report made to the German Embassy for September, 1916:

"Many disturbances and suspensions which war material factories have had to suffer, and which it was not always possible to remove quickly, but which on the contrary often lead to long strikes, may be attributed to the energetic propaganda of the employment bureau."

The attempt to paralyze industry by the creation of strikes was, as we have seen, the reason for Ambassador Dumba's dismissal. At the time when Dumba received his passports and suspicion was directed toward Von Bernstorff, the latter took the position that "this slander required no answer," and according

to Dumba "had the happy inspiration to refuse any explanation." But so determined was the German Government to tie up industry in this country that, not content with the diligence of Von Bernstorff, it sent to America to direct this enterprise the Kaiser's special friend and representative, Franz von Rintelen, of whose activities we have already learned. It was he who had started *Labor's National Peace Council*, one of whose main purposes was to provoke strikes in munition-factories, and he employed numerous agitators to do this with promises of from $5,000 to $10,000 reward in cases where they promoted "successful strikes."

How eager Von Rintelen was to carry out his designs is evident from his proposal to pay the members of the International Longshoremen's Union $10 a week while idle, and at the time of making the proposal he sent word that he had the $1,035,000 necessary for the purpose. While *Labor's National Peace Council* was being organized, Von Rintelen's accounts with the Transatlantic Trust Company show that he paid out from April to August $468,000. It is pleasant to remember that

here Greek met Greek, and that for all his diligence and munificence Von Rintelen received little in return.

More successful were the attempts made to start fires and explosions in American munition-factories. It would be impossible to give a list of all these, but some indication of their frequency and seriousness may be gleaned from the fact that at the time when the German agents were most active in this regard, within twenty-four hours between November 10 and 11, 1915, incendiary fires and explosions took place in the Bethlehem Steel Works, the Midvale Steel and Ordnance Company, the Baldwin Locomotive Works at Eddystone, and the John A. Roebling's Sons Company at Trenton, N. J. But besides the attempt to destroy our munition-factories, determined and systematic attempts, in many cases unfortunately successful, were made to blow up ships carrying munitions from this country to Europe. To this end several bomb-manufacturing plants were established under the direction of Captain von Papen and Wolf von Igel. When some of the conspirators were brought

to trial, one of the witnesses proved to be a detective who belonged to the New York "Bomb Squad." Under the pretense that he was a German secret-service man employed by Wolf von Igel (Von Papen's secretary), he had succeeded in making an appointment with Captain von Kleist, superintendent of one of these factories, and he gave the following account of the interview:

"We sat down and we spoke for about three hours. I asked him the different things that he did, and said if he wanted an interview with Mr. von Igel, my boss, he would have to tell everything. So he told me that Von Papen gave Dr. Scheele, the partner of Von Kleist in this factory, a check for $10,000 to start this bomb factory. . . . He told me that he, Mr. von Kleist, and Dr. Scheele and a man by the name of Becker on the *Friedrich der Grosse* were making the bombs, and that Captain Wolpert, Captain Bode, and Captain Steinberg, had charge of putting these bombs on the ships; they put these bombs in cases and shipped them as merchandise on these steamers, and they would go away on the trip and the bombs would go off after the ship was out four or five days, causing a fire and causing the cargo to go up in flames. . . . He also told me that they have made quite a number of these bombs;

that thirty of them were given to a party by the name of O'Leary, and that he took them down to New Orleans where he had charge of putting them on ships down there, this fellow O'Leary."

Between three and four hundred bombs were manufactured by this group and fires are known to have been started by them on thirty-three ships sailing from New York alone. There were, however, other factories in the East, and in addition the German consul in San Francisco showed in this regard the same diligence in deviltry that he had in others.

It is plain that the German Embassy and the German representatives in this country stopped at nothing in their attempt to advance their cause. We need not, therefore, be surprised in considering the last phase of their intrigue and plotting to find that, while they pretended to be at peace with us and protested friendship, they should all the time have been busily engaged in underhand plans to embroil the United States with its neighbors. In this way they thought they could create a situation which would demand our undivided attention, and make it impossible for us either to export

munitions or to take any measures against Germany for her violation of our rights. The scheme to which the German officials continually reverted was that of embroiling us with Mexico and Japan. In addition to his work in fomenting strikes Von Rintelen had evidently been given a special commission to start war if possible between ourselves and our southern neighbors. At his trial one of the witnesses testified that Rintelen had explained his purposes as follows:

"That he came to the United States in order to embroil it with Mexico and Japan if necessary; that he was doing all he could and was going to do all he could to embroil this country with Mexico; that he believed that if the United States had a war with Mexico it would stop the shipment of ammunition to Europe; that he believed it would be only a matter of time until we were involved with Japan.

"Rintelen also said that General Huerta was going to return to Mexico and start a revolution there which would cause the United States to intervene and so make it impossible to ship munitions to Europe. Intervention, he said, was one of his trump cards."

Everything that could be done in furtherance of this plan in the way of encouraging and at-

tempting to supply munitions to the Mexican rebels was done, and within Mexico itself Von Rintelen was in connection with other German agents who were conducting a powerful anti-American propaganda. This whole phase of his activity was to culminate in the notorious Zimmermann note, which was, however, not to become known in this country, at least not to the public till after our entry into the war. It will be cited later and proves a fitting climax to the three years of intrigue carried on by diplomats who spent what time they could spare from their underhand plotting, in protesting their friendship.

The brief summary given above is sufficient to show that Von Bernstorff's activities were such that he deserved to be dismissed long before he was. Our government seems to have been unwilling to act on facts established on unimpeachable evidence. If any one still under the spell of old ideas finds the record incredible or the complicity of the German Embassy in Von Papen's felonious attempts doubtful, he need merely scan the following accounts of the funds deposited to Von Papen's credit di-

rectly by the German Embassy. Some of these deposits were made by Ambassador von Bernstorff in person:

1914		
Sept. 9	$1,116.20	Bernstorff.
" 24	1,100.00	"
Oct. 21	1,000.00	"
Nov. 4	583.10	German Embassy.
" 25	2,000.00	" "
Dec. 7	2,583.10	Bernstorff.
1915		
Jan. 9	3,000.00	German Embassy.
" 15	2,000.00	" "
Feb. 5	2,000.00	Bernstorff.
" 24	1,500.00	German Embassy.
" 25	3,600.00	" "
" 26	1,749.30	" "
May 26	1,166.20	" "
June 1	583.10	" "
July 20	1,154.30	" "
Sept. 7	2,500.00	" "
Oct. 14	2,500.00	" "

In December, 1915, our government finally took action not against Von Bernstorff but against Von Bernstorff's tools, and Von Papen and Boy-Ed were recalled. On that occasion the German Government at Berlin sent to the

United States for publication in the press, the following official statement:

"The German Government has naturally never knowingly accepted the support of any person, group of persons, society or organization seeking to promote the cause of Germany in the United States by illegal acts, by counsel of violence, by contravention of law, or by any means whatever that could offend the American people in the pride of their own authority."

It is difficult to assess how far the facts recounted influenced our government or people, for it is impossible to say how much was definitely known at Washington at any given time. That these demonstrations of German bad faith became a factor in determining our attitude will be plain from President Wilson's statement which will be quoted in the concluding chapter.

CHAPTER IX

PEACE PROPOSALS

AS the war progressed during the period of the negotiations on the submarine question two things had become clearer with every month. In the first place, the issues of the war, which had at first been deliberately obscured by German diplomacy, were being gradually disclosed by her unmistakable conduct. In the second place, as our own experience proved, and as the President with his usual clear-sightedness had discerned, neutrality in so serious a conflict, involving such momentous interests, must become increasingly difficult, if not impossible. For very different reasons, then, by a curious coincidence, von Bethmann-Hollweg and President Wilson put forth at the same time proposals for peace. Perhaps nothing has been so difficult to understand as this seemingly similar action, for to the world at large and, indeed, to many of our people the very divergent motives which governed

the Chancellor and our President were not clearly set apart. Let us, therefore, begin by saying that the President's action had been planned long before he knew of the German intention, and if we would understand the two proposals we must consider them separately.

Let us examine therefore in some detail the German situation. With the publication of recent statements by Doctor Mühlon and Prince Lichnowsky, the belief that Germany was responsible for the war has naturally become a conviction. It is plain also that the German Government began it as a war of aggression, and though many of its subjects were and are still deluded, the progress of the war has made its purposes clear, even though with characteristic duplicity it has attempted to maintain the fiction that it is fighting in self-defense.

A large party, indeed, the most influential party in Germany, which included the militarists and Pan-Germanists, had as we have seen, intended that the new war prophesied by Bernhardi, and looked forward to as "The Day" should at last give Germany a considerable start toward the realization of *Gross Deutsch-*

land (greater Germany). The programme, as we saw in Chapter I, included annexation east and west. The adjoining peoples especially toward the east in Russia, the Balkans, and Asia Minor, were to be forced into the Empire, and the Hohenzollerns, who had made themselves masters of all Germany, were in turn to make themselves masters of Europe and the world. It is in the following language that Naumann, a deputy of the Reichstag and one of the best-known political publicists of Germany expresses it:

"And over all these; over the Germans, French, Danes, and Poles in the German Empire; over the Magyars, Germans, Roumanians, Slovaks, Croats, and Serbs in Hungary; over the Germans, Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, and southern Slavs in Austria, let us imagine once again the controlling concept of Mid-Europe."

That Germany planned to carry out this programme in the present war became clearer when six of the great industrial and agricultural associations of Germany, on May 20, 1915, presented their petition to the Chancellor.

They urged that Belgium should be subject

to Germany in "military and tariff matters, as well as in currency, banking, and post." Northern France as far as the river Somme should also be annexed for "our future position at sea," and the industrial establishments in the annexed territories should be transferred to German hands. From Russia part of the Baltic Provinces and the territories to the south should be taken. Germany's need of new agricultural territory, of new mining and industrial districts, especially of the coal and iron of Belgium and northern France, was emphasized.* This was to be followed just a month later by a petition signed by 1,341 of the most important members of the university, church, official, legal, literary, and artistic circles.

It advocated the annexation of the whole eastern part of France, from Belfort to the coast, and the transfer of the business undertakings and estates to German ownership. Belgium was to be held and the inhabitants allowed no political influence in the empire. The occupied part of Russia was to be retained and the land turned over to Germany. Egypt was

*See *War Cyclopædia* article, "No Annexations, No Indemnities."

to be taken from England. As to indemnities, "we ought not to hesitate to impose upon France as much as possible."*

Subsequent statements to the same purport could be added, but we can be in no doubt where Germany stood after Ambassador Gerard's report of his interview with Von Bethmann-Hollweg, while the German peace terms were still before the world. From the time when the question of peace was first broached Mr. Gerard asked the Chancellor and other officials what Germany's peace terms were. He could never succeed in drawing from them any definite terms, and on several occasions when he asked the Chancellor if Germany was willing to withdraw from Belgium, the Chancellor replied: "Yes, but with guarantees." He seemed unwilling to explain, but when pressed and asked directly what these guarantees were he replied:

"'We must possibly have the forts of Liége and Namur; we must have other forts and garrisons throughout Belgium. We must have possession of the railroad lines. We must have possession of the ports and other means of com-

War Cyclopœdia, ibid.

munication. The Belgians will not be allowed to maintain an army, but we must be allowed to retain a large army in Belgium. We must have the commercial control of Belgium.'"

Mr. Gerard explained that this left little for the Belgians except King Albert's right to an honor guard and residence in Brussels. The Chancellor continued, "We cannot allow Belgium to be an outpost (*Vorwerk*) of England," and Mr. Gerard replied: "'I do not suppose the English, on the other hand, wish it to become an outpost of Germany, especially as von Tirpitz has said that the coast of Flanders should be retained in order to make war on England and America!' I continued, 'How about Northern France?' He said, 'We are willing to leave Northern France, but there must be a rectification of the frontier.' I said, 'How about the Eastern frontier?' He said, 'We must have a very substantial rectification of our frontier.' I said, 'How about Roumania?' He said, 'We shall leave Bulgaria to deal with Roumania.' I said, 'How about Serbia?' He said, 'A very small Serbia may be allowed to exist, but that is a question for Austria. Aus-

tria must be left to do what she wishes to Italy, and we must have indemnities from all countries and all our ships and colonies back.'

"Of course, 'rectification of the frontier' is a polite term for annexation."*

We have considered Germany's war aims. Let us now consider for a moment the military situation when she made her proffers in December, 1916. She had been amazingly successful up to this point on practically all fronts. She occupied practically all of Belgium, Serbia, Montenegro, a large part of Roumania, Poland, and important stretches of Russia, and the coal and iron deposits of northern France. Russia at this time was still in the war and, if reorganized and provided with munitions, the lack of which had caused her disastrous retreat, she would become again a formidable enemy. The threat of the Anglo-French successes on the Somme (1916) had become so serious that the military authorities were already considering the retreat to the Hindenburg line in France,

* "My Four Years in Germany," by James W. Gerard, pp. 365–366.

and Von Bissing had expressed the fear that it might become necessary to evacuate Belgium. The situation, therefore, though it appeared outwardly very favorable, was in reality fraught with grave possibilities. The arch-enemy, England, had not yet been subdued. As the situation presented itself to the Germans it was probably in terms like this: We must either now make peace on the basis of our present very large holdings of territory, and prepare to settle the score with England later, or else start a war to the death on England and destroy her commerce and fleet.

If peace could be made on the basis of extent of occupied territory (and Germany suggested no other basis), she could not help coming out with enormously extended frontiers. She held all the trumps, and in the diplomatic game she must inevitably win. If, however, the Allies proved unwilling to make peace on such terms, Germany had long been preparing a weapon which the infallible military authorities assured her would starve England out and bring her to her knees, probably within three months, within six months at the latest. That weapon

was the submarine ruthlessly employed. The one drawback was the possibility of driving sorely tried neutrals into the arms of her enemies.

From the American attitude on the *Sussex* affair it was a plain inference that danger threatened from that quarter. The plan to use the submarine ruthlessly had, however, long since been decided upon. Indeed, immediately after the receipt in Berlin of our last *Sussex* note, Ambassador Gerard was so convinced that the rulers of Germany would at some future date take up ruthless submarine warfare, that he warned the State Department that such warfare would possibly come in the autumn or at any rate about February or March, 1917.* This may explain why President Wilson made the speeches which so startled America about the great dangers that threatened and the possibilities of the conflagration reaching us from one day to the next. When later, in September, Mr. Gerard returned to the United States, Von Jagow insistently urged him to make every effort to induce the President to take steps

* Gerard, "My Four Years in Germany," p. 345.

toward bringing about peace.* Germany had been industriously building submarines and was ready, so she thought, to give England the death-stroke.

Any peace that would be concluded would have to be a "German peace," and if peace were refused the blame would be put upon the Allies. The United States and other neutrals could, therefore, offer no objection to Germany's using the submarine, and riding roughshod over neutral rights, as she had already attempted to do at the time of the declaration of the war zone in February of 1915.

At the meeting of the Reichstag, therefore, on December 12, 1916, in a speech in which he explained the very favorable situation of the German armies, and denied there was any starvation or any disturbances in Germany, Von Bethmann-Hollweg announced that his Majesty had decided to stretch out his hand for peace at the price of Germany's "free future."

This phrase, whose meaning, like a gas, was capable of indefinite expansion, was one of the

* Gerard, "My Four Years in Germany," p. 346.

type that is to be found in every German proposal. The communication further insisted that the Central Powers had been obliged "to take up arms to defend justice and the liberty of national evolution." How they had defined justice we had learned from their actions in Belgium and on the high seas, and what they meant by national evolution is plain from the exposition by Herr Naumann quoted above. The note made no concrete suggestions. Its two material assertions were that the Entente bore the responsibility for beginning the war and that the Central Powers were now victorious.

The Allies naturally, in the phrase of Lloyd George, refused to put their heads into a noose of which Germany held the free end, and immediately and from practically all of the Allied countries came statements to the effect that they could not deal with her on this basis.*

The joint Entente reply of December 30, 1916, was to the effect that a mere suggestion,

* Premier Lloyd George's speech in the House of Commons, December 19, 1916. Premier Briand's speech in the French Chamber of Deputies, December 13. Resolution of the Russian Duma, December 15. Baron Sonnino's speech in the Italian Chamber of Deputies, December 18.

without statement of terms, that negotiations should be opened, is not an offer of peace, and that this sham proposal, lacking substance and precision, appeared to be less an offer of peace than a war manœuvre, which in fact it was. Considering the character of Germany's two statements and her previous attitude toward treaties it hardly seemed that war could be ended by accepting her word.

Let us turn from this to a consideration of the course of our own President. His proposal had undoubtedly begun to take shape in his own mind even before the *Sussex* affair had been settled. In an address at Washington before the League to Enforce Peace, on May 27, 1916, he had said:

"We are participants whether we would or not, in the life of the world. The interests of all nations are our own also . . . what affects mankind is inevitably our affair as well the affair of the nations of Europe and of Asia."

Against her will America had become convinced that she could no longer live in the charmed isolation which had been possible in the days of Washington and Monroe. The

submarine, naval cruiser and transport, the cable and wireless had brought us, whether we would or not, to the shores of Europe. "America up to the present time has been, as if by deliberate choice, confined and provincial, and it will be impossible for her to remain confined and provincial. Henceforth she belongs to the world and must act as part of the world."* Furthermore, as the President was to announce at Shadow Lawn on October 16:

"And now, by circumstances which she did not choose, over which she had no control, she [America] has been thrust out into the great game of mankind, on the stage of the world itself, and here she must know what she is about, and no nation in the world must doubt that all her forces are gathered and organized in the interest of just, righteous, and humane government."

His whole thought, or as much of it as he dared disclose without violating state secrets at the time, was even more clearly put in his address at Cincinnati on October 26:

"I believe that the business of neutrality is over, not because I want it to be over, but

* President Wilson, October 5, 1916.

I mean this, that war now has such a scale that the position of neutrals sooner or later becomes intolerable."

The burden of unsettled cases against the Allies and the much more serious questions against Germany was becoming so great that there was no telling when we might be forced to break under the strain. The belligerents naturally tended to increase their pretensions. We were the last great independent neutral, yet how long we could remain so was doubtful. If peace was to come before we were forced to enter the war, we must help to make it come.* The decision about the submarine *Deutschland* had been made against the protest of the Allies. Many of our own people were protesting against the conduct of the *U*-51 in sinking vessels carrying returning Americans just off our coast. Our own people were aroused against the deportation of the innocent civilian population in Belgium and northern France. Thousands of American citizens were protesting to Washington against the

* How serious this strain was becoming is evident from Secretary Lansing's statement given to the press on December 18, 1916, and immediately withdrawn.

outrage to humanity which we could not sit by and regard with unconcern under penalty of stultifying ourselves. This had impressed Washington so seriously that it had become the subject of correspondence with our ministers abroad.*

The reports of Germany's plans which Ambassador Gerard brought to Washington made it a case of now or never. For this reason and without knowing anything about the German peace manœuvre, and doubtless without having been impressed by Von Jagow's urging, President Wilson prepared an identic note to all the belligerents, which makes no pretense of being purely disinterested.

"In the measures to be taken to secure the future peace of the world the people and Government of the United States are as vitally and as directly interested as the Governments now at war. Their interest, moreover, in the means to be adopted to relieve the smaller and weaker peoples of the world of the peril of wrong and violence is as quick and ardent as that of any other people or Government. They stand

* Department of State, Diplomatic Correspondence with Belligerent Governments Relating to Neutral Rights and Duties, European War, No. 4, pp. 357–373.

ready, and even eager, to co-operate in the accomplishment of these ends, when the war is over, with every influence and resource at their command. But the war must first be concluded. The terms upon which it is to be concluded they are not at liberty to suggest; but the President does feel that it is his right and his duty to point out their intimate interest in its conclusion, lest it should presently be too late to accomplish the greater things which lie beyond its conclusion, lest the situation of neutral nations, now exceedingly hard to endure, be rendered altogether intolerable, and lest, more than all, an injury be done civilization itself which can never be atoned for or repaired." *

He asked therefore that the leaders of the several belligerents make statements of the "precise objects which would, if attained, satisfy them and their people that the war had been fought out." It was evident that he hoped to bring about some "concert of free peoples," before "resentments were kindled that could never cool and despairs engendered from which there could be no recovery."

The spirit of this communication was worlds removed from that of Germany, and nothing

* President Wilson's Peace Note, December 18, 1916. For documents regarding peace see Appendix II.

proved the insincerity of the German claim so completely as her answer to this frank and direct request. This idea of a peace based on principles plainly embarrassed her. She replied lamely and evasively that it was the view of the Imperial Government "that the great work for the prevention of future wars can first be taken up only after the ending of the present conflict of exhaustion." The reply proved, as all German history might have led us to foresee, that Germany wanted no concert of free peoples and no league to enforce peace. She did not wish to be forced to any statement of principle, so contented herself with assurances of friendship and the suggestion that "a direct exchange of views appears to the Imperial Government as the most suitable way of arriving at the desired result." In other words she wanted a peace not based on any recognition of the rights of small nations or on any other recognized principle that conflicted with her notion of her own "national evolution" and "free future." *

* German Reply to President Wilson's Peace Note, December 26, 1916. Appendix II.

It is interesting to note that the German Government made no definite proposal and did not suggest even a return to the "status quo ante bellum" either in her own bid for peace or in her reply to President Wilson.

The reply of the Allies was far more definite. They were heartily in favor of the "creation of a league of nations to insure peace and justice throughout the world," and recognized "all the advantages for the cause of humanity and civilization which the institution of international agreements destined to avoid violent conflict between nations would prevent."* They insisted, however, with right that the Central Empires were responsible for the war, and protested against the statement made in the President's request that all of the belligerents seemed to be fighting for the same thing. For to the last the President had remained charitable and refrained from judging the motives of the Central Powers. It was natural, however, that the Allies should have refused to allow themselves to be classed on the same footing with the Central Powers, and Belgium quite cor-

Von Bethmann-Hollweg's statement to Ambassador Gerard shows that she counted on much more than this. In President Wilson's Note to the Russian People of June 9, 1917, he makes plain that the status quo ante could not be accepted as a satisfactory basis for future peace. "It was the status quo ante out of which this iniquitous war issued forth, the power of the Imperial German Government within the empire and its wide-spread domination and influence outside that empire. That status must be altered in such fashion as to prevent any such hideous thing from ever happening again."

* Entente Reply to President Wilson's Peace Note, January 10, 1917. Appendix II.

rectly and in a spirit of wounded aggrievance sent a separate note in which she claimed the proud right to say that she had taken up arms to defend her existence, and that it was unfair to think that Germany was fighting for the same principle or the same ends.* All of the Allies, however, agreed that they wished to attain a peace which would assure them "reparation, restitution, and guarantees," to which they held themselves entitled by the aggressions committed against them. With regard to the conditions of peace for the different members of the Entente they specified how in general these principles must be applied, though they could not give all of the details until the beginning of negotiations. They closed with their assurance that they wished a peace based upon principles of liberty and justice, and the inviolable fidelity to international obligations. The results were exactly what might have been expected. Germany could hardly have set forth a principle for which she was fighting, as there was none which she had not violated in her fight. She wanted an-

*Belgian Note Supplementary to Entente Reply. Appendix II.

nexations and prestige. Though the President was probably disappointed since he may have hoped the military situation of Germany was serious enough to abate her pretensions, yet he could hardly have expected much more. He has the satisfaction, however, of having given Germany every opportunity and made her every concession consistent with our honor and independence. The answer of Germany indicated that further efforts along this line would be useless, but the President made one more desperate and unavailing effort by stating before Congress on January 22, 1917, the bases and principles of the peace which America could accept, ratify, and assist in maintaining. It was to be the peace of justice. The rights of all peoples to determine their government in the future were to be recognized as well as the rights of all to the free highways of the sea (for which Germany claimed to be contending), and this peace was to be achieved without the crushing of any of the belligerents. It was to be the "peace without victory." But all his eloquence and good-will were wasted on the leaders of Germany. They were not

willing to consider proposals of principles and had already made their choice. Either the Allies must accept a German peace or America would have to accept the last reckless phase of ruthlessness.

CHAPTER X

THE FINAL CHALLENGE

WHILE the American people were still earnestly discussing President Wilson's proposals for a world peace made in his address before the Senate on January 22, the German ambassador handed to the Secretary of State along with a formal note a memorandum which contained the following statement:

"The Imperial Government, therefore, does not doubt that the Government of the United States will understand the situation thus forced upon Germany by the Entente Allies' brutal methods of war and by their determination to destroy the Central Powers, and that the Government of the United States will further realize that the now openly disclosed intentions of the Entente Allies give back to Germany the freedom of action which she reserved in her note addressed to the Government of the United States on May 4, 1916.*

"Under these circumstances Germany will meet the illegal measures of her enemies by

For documents cited in this chapter, see Appendix on "War Aims and Peace Terms."

* Any such interpretation of the German note had been specifically precluded by the American note of May 8, 1916. See Chapter VIII.

forcibly preventing after February 1, 1917, in a zone around Great Britain, France, Italy, and in the eastern Mediterranean all navigation, that of neutrals included, from and to France, etc. All ships met within the zone will be sunk." *

The precipitancy of Germany's action showed that this move had been prepared in advance, that she had already decided upon her second alternative, and to any negotiated peace of principle she preferred a ruthless war. The hollowness of her peace proposals had already become painfully evident. She had made the manœuvre for the reasons discussed in the last chapter and with the hope of dividing the belligerent peoples and of making neutrals believe that a "new situation" had been created.

Apart from the great zones declared in the Mediterranean by her obedient ally, Austria-Hungary, prohibited zones extended in a broad belt from Spain to the Faroe Islands. If she could do this there was no reason why she should not extend it to our own three-mile limit, and, indeed, to our very shores. But

* Department of State, Diplomatic Correspondence with Belligerent Governments, etc., European War, No. 4, pp. 405–407.

more serious and amazing than the decree of this zone itself was the curt statement that all ships met within the zone would be sunk.

We had announced in our note to Germany of April 18, 1916,* that, unless the German Government immediately declared and effected an abandonment of its present methods of submarine warfare, the "Government of the United States could have no choice but to sever diplomatic relations with the German Empire altogether." There was, therefore, no possibility of argument or discussion. Germany declared not only that she expected to revert to the methods she had employed before the sinking of the *Sussex*, but that she planned to enter upon a warfare even more ruthless which would accept no restraint of law whatever. She was threatening not only to violate all rules of international law, but also the solemn promise made to the United States.

It was not surprising, therefore, that the President for a time should have been nonplussed. He refused to believe that Germany could mean what she seemed to say and spoke like an honest man, who, stunned by a blow,

* *Cf.* Chapter VIII.

still feels that his hurt may be due not to wilful attack but to some incomprehensible accident. Though his course of action was clearly indicated, he still desired to be charitable in his interpretation. In his address to Congress on February 3, he was to take Congress and the people very fully into his confidence:

"Notwithstanding this unexpected action of the German Government, this sudden and deeply deplorable renunciation of its assurances, given this Government at one of the most critical moments of tension in the relations of the two governments, I refuse to believe that it is the intention of the German authorities to do in fact what they have warned us they will feel at liberty to do. I cannot bring myself to believe that they will indeed pay no regard to the ancient friendship* between their people and

* This traditional friendship had been insisted upon in many of the German communications with our Government. The following are expressions of German opinion on the United States at the time of the war with Spain:

The *Cologne Zeitung* wrote, on April 22, 1898: "Our sympathy belongs to Spain, because she represents international law."

The *Kreutzzeitung* of April 28: "The lowest motives brought about this war."

Of April 27: "Open greed for plunder occasioned this war."

The *Vossische Zeitung* of April 8: "The American people have not the right to assume at once the rôle of judge and dictator."

Of April 10: "The whole American republic was founded upon the violation of the rights of other peoples."

The *Taegliche Rundschau:* "American politicians are pocketbook patriots, who allow themselves to be bought and sold by the industrial millionaires. Their God is Mammon, and they betray their own country."

our own or to the solemn obligations which have been exchanged between them, and destroy American ships and take the lives of American citizens in the wilful prosecution of the ruthless naval programme they have announced their intention to adopt.

"Only actual overt acts on their part can make me believe it even now."

There was no possible alternative, and passports were, therefore, issued to Ambassador von Bernstorff by Secretary of State Lansing on this eventful date.

Let us try to understand why Germany took upon herself the guilt for this additional breach of faith. But let us not make the mistake of attributing to Germany the ordinary principles of political morality. The explanation was simple, and was bluntly given to the Reichstag by the German Chancellor in an address of January 31. He had been Chancellor at the time of the *Sussex* negotiations, and the promise made by Germany had been freely given after due deliberation and with the alternative of severing diplomatic relations frankly offered. "The question of the U-boat war, as the gentlemen of the Reichstag will remember, has oc-

cupied us three times in this committee, in March, May, and September, last year [1916]. On each occasion in an exhaustive statement I expounded for and against in this question." (The meeting in May was evidently the one held at the time when, after weighing all sides of the question, he and his government had made the promise to America.) "I emphasized on each occasion," continued Von Bethmann-Hollweg, "that . . . I was speaking pro tempore, and not as a supporter in principle or an opponent in principle of the unrestricted employment of the U-boats, but in consideration of the military, political, and economic situation as a whole.

"I always proceeded from the standpoint as to whether an unrestricted U-boat war would bring us nearer to a victorious peace or not. Every means, I said in March, that is calculated to shorten the war is the humanest policy to follow. When the most ruthless methods are considered as the best calculated to lead us to a victory and to a swift victory, I said at that time, then they must be employed."

He had confessed his guilt in the case of Bel-

gium at the beginning of the war. Let us see how he will do it now. He proceeded:

"This moment has now arrived. Last Autumn the time was not yet ripe, but to-day the moment has come when, with the greatest prospect of success, we can undertake this enterprise. We must, therefore, not wait any longer. Where has there been a change?

"In the first place, the most important fact of all is that the number of our submarines has very considerably increased as compared with last spring, and thereby a firm basis has been created for success. The second codecisive reason is the bad wheat harvest of the world."

We would expect that he would now go on to mention the third and all-important consideration, a solemn promise given to another great state. We are mistaken. The promise made is not even mentioned. It had been given only to deceive America and to give Germany time to build more submarines which she had evidently been doing at the very time when the promise was made. Unabashed, he continued:

"If we may now venture to estimate the positive advantages of an unrestricted U-boat

war at a very much higher value than last spring, the dangers which arise for us from the U-boat war have correspondingly decreased since that time."

He had consulted not the German people, he had consulted not his conscience, he had consulted Hindenburg, and explained that, "A few days ago Marshal von Hindenburg described to me the situation as follows: 'Our front stands firm on all sides. We have everywhere the requisite reserves. The spirit of the troops is good and confident. The military situation, as a whole, permits us to accept all consequences which an unrestricted U-boat war may bring about, and as this U-boat war in all circumstances is the means to injure our enemies most grievously, it must be begun.'"

This was all, but it threw a long stream of light over the whole course of the war to which we had deliberately and officially closed our eyes. It explained to us what had happened to the treaty guaranteeing Belgium, it explained to us at last, and made only too clear, the reasons for German atrocities on land and sea. It gave us a stake in this war. It was no longer for us

merely a question of humanity or of principle. It was a question of immediate interest, of self-defense against this hopelessly aggressive and militaristic power whose policy was again threatening not only the foundations of international law but ourselves.

The principle or rather the excuse of "military necessity" had become now merely military expediency. As Secretary of State Lansing was to put it:

"It is this disclosure of the character of the Imperial German Government which is the underlying cause of our entry into the war. We had doubted, or at least many Americans had doubted, the evil purposes of the rulers of Germany. Doubt remained no longer.

"In the light of events we could read the past, and see that for a quarter of a century the absorbing ambition of the military oligarchy which was the master of the German Empire was for world dominion. Every agency in the fields of commerce, industry, science, and diplomacy had been directed by the German Government to this supreme end. Philosophers and preachers taught that the destiny of Germany was to rule the world, thus preparing the minds of the German people for the time when the mighty engine which the German Government had constructed should crush all

opposition and the German Emperor should rule supreme." *

We were not dealing with a people, we were dealing with a group of irresponsible plotters who had long been accepted as rulers by a people obsessed by the idea of their own superiority, which raised them not only above other states, but above the right and those laws on which all states are based. If then we came to speak of a war between democracy and autocracy, what we meant will be clear if we compare Germany's course in this affair with President Wilson's, or consider for a moment a sentence in the First Inaugural of the first President of the Republic. At that time Washington had announced:

". . . The foundation of our national policy will be laid in the pure and immutable principles of private morality, and the pre-eminence of free government be exemplified by all the attributes which can win the affection of its citizens and command the respect of the world. I dwell on this prospect with every satisfaction which an ardent love for my country can in-

* *Cf.* "A War of Self-Defense," by Robert Lansing. Louis F. Post, Committee on Public Information, p. 4.

spire, since there is no truth more thoroughly established than that there exists in the economy and course of nature an indissoluble union between virtue and happiness; between duty and advantage; between the genuine maxims of an honest and magnanimous policy and the solid rewards of public prosperity and felicity; since we ought to be no less persuaded that the propitious smiles of Heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right which Heaven itself has ordained; and since the preservation of the sacred fire of liberty and the destiny of the republican model of government are justly considered, perhaps, as deeply, as finally, staked on the experiment intrusted to the hands of the American people."

Instead of any such principle, whenever a question of German policy was to be decided, the Chancellor, who is not responsible to any Reichstag or any people, consulted a Hindenburg or a Von Tirpitz or a Ludendorff, and in secret decided upon a war or the violation of a treaty. Upon their action there is no check, and argument is useless, since their promises are without value. Aggression is the very condition of the life of this militaristic state, and the natural attitude of all other nations must,

therefore, be one of self-defense until the present Germany is overthrown.

The fundamental antagonisms which set ourselves and Prussia asunder were now clear as day.

It was plain also why Germany received coldly President Wilson's proposal for a Concert of Powers. It was also plain why at The Hague Conference she had stood in the way of general disarmament. The army is the life of this state, its one reason for being, and Professor Delbrück wrote in 1914:

"Any one who has any familiarity at all with our officers and generals knows that it would take another Sedan, inflicted on us instead of by us, before they would acquiesce in the control of the army by the German Parliament."

We now understood why she was the only one of the great Powers that had refused to sign with us an arbitration treaty. Weak nations she crushed without regard or mercy. In this way she had started the present war on Serbia, and had achieved her first characteristic triumph in Belgium. Strong nations, of whose power she was more jealous and against whom

her animosity was therefore more particularly directed, she circumvented by ruse and attempted to destroy by sudden treacherous strokes. The difference between the spirit of the two nations was illustrated in the treatment accorded to the two departing ambassadors. The German consular officials and representatives were treated with courtesy, safe-conducts were procured for them, and on February 14 they departed for Europe. Ambassador Gerard, on the other hand, was held in Berlin against his will from Monday until Saturday, much of that time in his house, cut off from communication with the outside world, his telephone for a time having been disconnected and his mail withheld. He was for some days unable to communicate with other officers or his government, or to transmit instructions to consular officials. They attempted to dragoon him into signing a treaty, while thus kept in ignorance of events, and it was only after this was discovered to be impossible that he was allowed to proceed on his way to Switzerland.* Many Americans, from having heard it repeated so

* "My Four Years in Germany," p. 383.

frequently in our diplomatic correspondence, had come to believe that there was a particular friendship existing between the German people and ourselves. When Ambassador Gerard returned and was free to speak, he told a quite different story. Very early in the war the American flag was covered with crape and laid at the feet of the statue of Frederick the Great with a placard insulting our government, and he had had difficulty in having it removed.

During the winter of the submarine controversy before the sinking of the *Lusitania*, one of the most conservative newspapers, the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, printed an interview with Von Tirpitz thinly veiled as a high naval authority. In this interview the "high naval authority" advocated ruthless submarine war with England, promising to effect thereby the speedy surrender of that country. After the surrender, which was to include the whole British fleet, the German fleet with this accession of strength was to sail for America and exact from us indemnities sufficient to pay the whole cost of the war.

After his fall Von Tirpitz, in a letter to some

admirers who had sent him verses and a wreath, advocated holding the coast of Flanders as a necessity for the war against England and America.*

Zimmermann had made it plain to Colonel House on the latter's visit that Germany was ready to go to war with the United States. They were the more ready to do this as they scorned us for our impotence and insisted that "public sentiment of your country is such that you will not be able to raise an army large enough to make any impression." †

Germany's purposes toward us were then or were soon to become evident. With characteristic indirection before his departure, Von Bernstorff requested the Swiss Minister to say that the German Government was now as before willing to negotiate with the United States, "providing that the commercial blockade against England will not be broken thereby." Secretary Lansing answered to the effect "that the Government of the United States would gladly discuss with the German Government any questions it might propose for discussion

* Gerard, "My Four Years in Germany," p. 249. † *Ibid.*, p. 336.

were it to withdraw its proclamation of the 31st of January in which and without previous intimation of any kind it cancelled the assurances which it had given." *

Ambassador von Bernstorff further requested urgently that no measures be taken until he should have had an opportunity of laying the matter before his own government. The President was evidently willing to make this further concession, and took no decisive action until he addressed Congress on February 26, asking for a grant of power. He was still unwilling to make war and hoped that "it will not be necessary to put armed forces anywhere into action," though he held that we must defend our commerce and the lives of our people with great and steadfast purpose. Germany had evidently already put her threat into execution and had sunk on February 3 the American ship *Housatonic*, and on February 13 the *Lyman M. Law*. The President, therefore, wished authorization to supply our merchant ships "with defensive arms should that become neces-

* Department of State, Diplomatic Correspondence with Belligerent Governments Relating to Neutral Rights and Duties, European War, No. 4, pp. 414–415.

sary, and with the means of using them, and to employ any other instrumentalities or methods that may be necessary and adequate to protect our ships and their cargoes in their peaceful and legitimate pursuits of the seas." * Congress was overwhelmingly in favor of granting this request and more than five hundred out of 531 members of the two Houses of Congress were ready and eager to act. But a filibuster by a handful of "wilful men" led by Senator LaFollette prolonged debate until the expiration of the congressional session March 4, and made action impossible. On March 12, however, orders were finally issued to arm American ships against submarines.

There could no longer be any doubt about Germany's intentions. On March 2, she had continued the sinking of American vessels, and there were added to the list the *Algonquin*, March 2, 1917; the *Vigilancia*, March 16; the *City of Memphis* and the *Illinois*, March 17; the *Healdton* March 21 (the latter sunk even outside the prohibited zone); and the *Aztec*,

* The right to do this is plainly implied in the President's constitutional powers. He wished, however, to feel that he had the authority of Congress behind him.

April 1. Up to this time 226 Americans, many of them women and children, had lost their lives by the action of German submarines. It was not necessary after what had already happened for the German Government to give us any further evidence of perfidy. It was, however, to do so, and to allow by mischance to fall into our hands a despatch which is remarkable, even in the history of her own tortuous and dishonest diplomacy. The document came to the knowledge of our State Department during the last week in February. It had been forwarded by Zimmermann, the German Foreign Minister to the German Minister in Mexico. It had been written on January 19, in other words, while we were still discussing peace, three days before President Wilson issued his proposal for world peace, and twelve days before Germany announced her intention of resuming unrestricted submarine warfare. It read as follows:

"On the 1st of February we intend to begin submarine warfare unrestricted. In spite of this it is our intention to endeavor to keep neutral the United States of America. If this at-

tempt is not successful, we propose an alliance on the following basis with Mexico: That we shall give general financial support, and it is understood that Mexico is to reconquer the lost territory in New Mexico, Texas, and Arizona. The details are left to you for settlement. You are instructed to inform the President of Mexico of the above in great confidence as soon as it is certain that there will be an outbreak of war with the United States and suggest that the President of Mexico on his own initiative should communicate with Japan suggesting adherence at once to this plan: at the same time offer to mediate between Germany and Japan. Please call to the attention of the President of Mexico that the employment of ruthless submarine warfare now promises to compel England to make peace in a few months."

Patience was no longer a virtue. On April 2, the President summoned an extra session of Congress, and addressed the Senate as follows:

". . . The present German submarine warfare against commerce is a warfare against Mankind. It is a war against all nations. American ships have been sunk, American lives taken, in ways which it has stirred us very deeply to learn of, but the ships and people of other neutral and friendly nations have been

sunk and overwhelmed in the waters in the same way. There has been no discrimination. The challenge is to all mankind. Each nation must decide for itself how it will meet it. . . . There is one choice we cannot make, we are incapable of making: we will not choose the path of submission and suffer the most sacred rights of our nation and our people to be ignored or violated. The wrongs against which we now array ourselves are no common wrongs; they cut to the very roots of human life.

"With a profound sense of the solemn and even tragical character of the step I am taking and of the grave responsibilities which it involves, but in unhesitating obedience to what I deem my constitutional duty, I advise that the Congress declare the recent course of the Imperial German Government to be in fact nothing less than war against the Government and people of the United States; that it formally accept the status of belligerent which has thus been thrust upon it; and that it take immediate steps not only to put the country in a more thorough state of defense but also to exert all its power and employ all its resources to bring the Government of the German Empire to terms and end the war. . . . It will involve the utmost practicable co-operation in counsel and action with the Governments now at war with Germany. . . .

"We have no quarrel with the German people. We have no feeling toward them but one of sympathy and friendship. It was not

upon their impulse that their Government acted in entering this war. It was not with their previous knowledge or approval. It was a war determined upon as wars used to be determined upon in the old unhappy days when peoples were nowhere consulted by their rulers, and wars were provoked and waged in the interest of dynasties or of little groups of ambitious men who were accustomed to use their fellow men as pawns and tools. Self-governed nations do not fill their neighbor states with spies or set the course of intrigue to bring about some critical posture of affairs which will give them an opportunity to strike and make conquest. Such designs can be successfully worked out only under cover and where no one has the right to ask questions. Cunningly contrived plans of deception or aggression, carried, it may be, from generation to generation, can be worked out and kept from the light only within the privacy of courts or behind the carefully guarded confidences of a narrow and privileged class. They are happily impossible where public opinion commands and insists upon full information concerning all the nation's affairs.

"A steadfast concert for peace can never be maintained except by a partnership of democratic nations. No autocratic Government could be trusted to keep faith within it or to observe its covenants. It must be a league of honor, a partnership of opinion. Intrigue would eat its vitals away; the plottings of inner

circles who could plan what they would and render account to no one would be a corruption seated at its very heart. Only free peoples can hold their purpose and their honor steady to a common end and prefer the interests of mankind to any narrow interest of their own. . . .

" . . . The world must be made safe for democracy. Its peace must be planted upon the tested foundations of political liberty. We have no selfish ends to serve. We desire no conquest, no dominion. We seek no indemnities for ourselves, no material compensation for the sacrifices we shall freely make. We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind. We shall be satisfied when those rights have been made as secure as the faith and the freedom of nations can make them. . . ."

The reasons given by the President set forth so calmly and judicially the main points then immediately at issue that it is hardly necessary to discuss them further. He was right in asserting that the war had been brought about without the previous knowledge of the German people. He was still, however, too charitable in believing that it was brought about without the tacit approval of at least a large majority.

Four days later, on April 6, 1917, Congress

decreed that "the state of war between the United States and the Imperial German Government which has thus been thrust upon the United States is hereby formally declared."

The historical documents make plain how slowly, how deliberately, how unwillingly we were pushed into war and for what reasons. Principles were involved and they were, to be sure, the highest principles known to free men. But in the face of the record it is a mistake for any one to believe that we went into this war to fight any other nation's battles. If ever we were threatened in our own existence it was in the years 1914–1917. No cause was ever more truly or directly our own, or involved more completely the fundamental basis of our government than the cause in which we are now engaged. If for the Germans, with their philosophy of aggression, it was a question of "world power or downfall," for us, with our traditions of independence, it was a case of victory or annihilation as a free people.

What tolerance and a love of peace could do to prevent this calamity had been done. So long as we had the poor security of "a scrap

of paper" between ourselves and Germany we treated her as a friend. Never until our entry into the war did our government in a single instance deviate from the course of strict neutrality as interpreted by intelligent, conscientious and impartial judges. We had closed our eyes to Germany's deliberate violation of treaties, to her brutal and inhuman disregard of all the laws of war on land. We had refrained from protesting her offenses against The Hague Conventions which we ourselves had signed with her; we had overlooked her attacks on our rights on the seas, and accepted settlements and a promise for the deaths of over two hundred of our citizens. Our President worked loyally for a peace of principle at a time when Germany proclaimed it was her desire to make peace, and yet even while she said it, she was conspiring against us in secret, until for the sake of our existence and our honor we replied at last and declared upon her an honest war in the open.

APPENDIX I

DOCUMENTS CONCERNING THE VIOLATION OF THE NEUTRALITY OF BELGIUM

I. Text of Treaties. Establishing the Neutrality of Belgium

"Belgium . . . shall form a perpetually neutral State.

"The five powers . . . guarantee to it this perpetual neutrality, as also the integrity and inviolability of its territory. . . ."

(Article 5 of the Treaty of 18 Articles signed on the 26th June, 1831, by the representatives of the five Great Powers, including Prussia, and approved by the National Congress of the 9th July, 1831.)

"Belgium, within the limits specified in Articles 1, 2 and 4 shall form an independent and perpetually neutral State. It shall be bound to observe such neutrality towards all other States."

(Article VII of the Treaty of 19th April, 1839, between Belgium and the Netherlands.)

"H.M. the Emperor of Austria, King of Hungary and Bohemia, H.M. the King of the French, H.M. the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, H.M. the King of Prussia and H.M. the Emperor of all the Russias, declare that the Articles hereunto annexed, and forming the tenour of the Treaty concluded this day

between His Majesty the King of the Belgians and H.M. the King of the Netherlands, Grand Duke of Luxembourg, are considered as having the same force and validity as if they were textually inserted in the present Act, and that they are thus placed under the guarantee of their said Majesties."

(Article I of the Treaty signed at London on the 19th of April, 1839.)

II. Confirmation by Bismarck

"Sir,

"In confirmation of my oral assurances, I have the honour to give you in writing the declaration—superfluous in view of the treaties in force—that the North German Confederation and its allies will respect the neutrality of Belgium, provided of course that it is respected by the other belligerent."

(Letter from Herr von Bismarck to Baron Northomb, Belgian Minister at Berlin, dated 22nd July, 1870.)

III. Status of Neutrals. Articles of The Hague Convention (V) of 1907

"Article I.—The territory of neutral Powers is inviolable.

"Article II.—Belligerents are forbidden to move across the territory of a neutral Power troops and convoys, either of munitions of war or of supplies.

"Article X.—The fact of a neutral Power repelling, even by force, attacks on its neutrality cannot be considered as a hostile act."

Signed by 44 States, including Germany and the United States.

IV. Declarations of Official Representatives of the German Empire

"Belgian neutrality is provided for by International Conventions and Germany is determined to respect those Conventions."

(Herr von Jagow, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, at the meeting of the Budget Committee of the Reichstag on April 29th, 1913.)

"Germany will not lose sight of the fact that the neutrality of Belgium is guaranteed by International treaty."

(Herr von Heeringen, Minister of War, at the same meeting.)

(These statements were made in reply to questions raised by members of the Social Democratic Party. Quoted from *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*.)

Statements of the German Minister at Brussels

"In the course of the conversation which the Secretary-General of my Department had with Herr von Below this morning, he explained to the German Minister the scope of the military measures which we had taken, and said to him that they were a consequence of our desire to fulfil our international obligations, and that they in no wise implied an attitude of distrust towards our neighbours.

"The Secretary-General then asked the German Minister if he knew of the conversation which he had had with his predecessor, Herr von Flotow, and of the reply which the Imperial Chancellor had instructed the latter to give.

"In the course of the controversy which arose in 1911 as a consequence of the Dutch scheme for the fortification

of Flushing, certain newspapers had maintained that in the case of a Franco-German war Belgian neutrality would be violated by Germany.

"The Department of Foreign Affairs had suggested that a declaration in the German Parliament during a debate on foreign affairs would serve to calm public opinion, and to dispel the mistrust which was so regrettable from the point of view of the relations between the two countries.

"Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg replied that he had fully appreciated the feelings which had inspired our representations. He declared that Germany had no intention of violating Belgian neutrality, but he considered that in making a public declaration Germany would weaken her military position in regard to France, who, secured on the northern side, would concentrate all her energies on the east.

"Baron van der Elst, continuing, said that he perfectly understood the objections raised by Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg to the proposed public declaration, and he recalled the fact that since then, in 1913, Herr von Jagow had made reassuring declarations to the Budget Commission of the Reichstag respecting the maintenance of Belgian neutrality.

"Herr von Below replied that he knew of the conversation with Herr von Flotow, and that he was certain that the sentiments expressed at that time had not changed."

(Letter, dated 31st July, 1914, addressed by M. Davignon, Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs, to the King's Ministers at Berlin, London and Paris.)

"The troops will not cross Belgian territory. Grave events are imminent. Perhaps you will see your neigh-

bour's house in flames, but the fire will spare your dwelling."

(Herr von Below, German Minister at Brussels, to Brussels journalists on the morning of the 2nd August, 1914.)

On August 2 the German Consul-General distributed to all German reservists in Antwerp a notice giving them the order to mobilize:

At the end of the circular the following sentence was added: "Germany, as well as France, has given to Belgium the assurance that her neutrality will be respected."

V. The Attitude of France

No. 15

"*M. Davignon, Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs, to the Belgian Ministers at Berlin, Paris, and London*

"Brussels, August 1, 1914.

"Sir,

"I have the honour to inform you that the French Minister has made the following verbal communication to me:

(Translation)

"'I am authorised to declare that, in the event of an international war, the French Government, in accordance with the declarations they have always made, will respect the neutrality of Belgium. In the event of this neutrality not being respected by another Power, the French Government, to secure their own defence, might find it necessary to modify their attitude.'

"I thanked his Excellency and added that we on our

side had taken without delay all the measures necessary to ensure that our independence and our frontiers should be respected."

VI. The German Ultimatum

"Imperial German Legation in Belgium,
"Brussels, August 2, 1914."

(Very Confidential)

"Reliable information has been received by the German Government to the effect that French forces intend to march on the line of the Meuse by Givet and Namur. This information leaves no doubt as to the intention of France to march through Belgian territory against Germany.*

"The German Government cannot but fear that Belgium, in spite of the utmost goodwill, will be unable, without assistance, to repel so considerable a French invasion with sufficient prospect of success to afford an adequate

(*Instead of proving the charges against France, Germany a few months later shifted her ground and made accusations that Belgium had forfeited her status as a neutral by entering into alliance with Great Britain. This she attempted to substantiate by publishing in inaccurate form and sometimes misrepresenting the character of documents discovered in Brussels after its occupation by her troops. These tardy charges, coming as an afterthought, were hardly conclusive. But even had they been what Germany pretended they were, they could not have justified her as their existence was unknown at the time of her action against Belgium. Instead of justifying herself she slandered her victim.)

On August 10, 1914, Emperor William, after a conversation with Ambassador Gerard, sent a personal telegram to President Wilson in which he presented Germany's position in the war. In it he states that Belgium's neutrality "had to be violated by Germany on strategical grounds, news having been received that France was already preparing to enter Belgium."

guarantee against danger to Germany. It is essential for the self-defence of Germany that she should anticipate any such hostile attack. The German Government would, however, feel the deepest regret if Belgium regarded as an act of hostility against herself the fact that the measures of Germany's opponents force Germany, for her own protection, to enter Belgian territory.

"In order to exclude any possibility of misunderstanding, the German Government make the following declaration:

"1. Germany has in view no act of hostility against Belgium. In the event of Belgium being prepared in the coming war to maintain an attitude of friendly neutrality towards Germany, the German Government bind themselves, at the conclusion of peace, to guarantee the possessions and independence of the Belgian Kingdom in full.

"2. Germany undertakes, under the above-mentioned condition, to evacuate Belgian territory on the conclusion of peace.

"3. If Belgium adopts a friendly attitude, Germany is prepared, in co-operation with the Belgian authorities, to purchase all necessaries for her troops against a cash payment, and to pay an indemnity for any damage that may have been caused by German troops.

"4. Should Belgium oppose the German troops, and in particular should she throw difficulties in the way of their march by a resistance of the fortresses on the Meuse, or by destroying railways, roads, tunnels, or other similar works, Germany will, to her regret, be compelled to consider Belgium as an enemy.

"In this event, Germany can undertake no obligations towards Belgium, but the eventual adjustment of the

relations between the two States must be left to the decision of arms.

"The German Government, however, entertain the distinct hope that this eventuality will not occur, and that the Belgian Government will know how to take the necessary measures to prevent the occurrence of incidents such as those mentioned. In this case the friendly ties which bind the two neighbouring States will grow stronger and more enduring."

(Translation of the German ultimatum.)

VII. Belgium's Reply

"Brussels, 3rd August, 1914.

"The German Government stated in their note of the 2nd August, 1914, that according to reliable information French forces intended to march on the Meuse via Givet and Namur, and that Belgium, in spite of the best intentions, would not be in a position to repulse, without assistance, an advance of French troops.

"The German Government, therefore, considered themselves compelled to anticipate this attack and to violate Belgian territory. In these circumstances, Germany proposed to the Belgian Government to adopt a friendly attitude towards her, and undertook, on the conclusion of peace, to guarantee the integrity of the Kingdom and its possessions to their full extent. The note added that if Belgium put difficulties in the way of the advance of German troops, Germany would be compelled to consider her as an enemy, and to leave the ultimate adjustment of the relations between the two States to the decision of arms.

"This note has made a deep and painful impression upon the Belgian Government.

"The intentions attributed to France by Germany are in contradiction to the formal declarations made to us on August 1, in the name of the French Government.

"Moreover, if, contrary to our expectation, Belgian neutrality should be violated by France, Belgium intends to fulfil her international obligations and the Belgian army would offer the most vigorous resistance to the invader.

"The treaties of 1839, confirmed by the treaties of 1870, vouch for the independence and neutrality of Belgium under the guarantee of the Powers, and notably of the Government of His Majesty the King of Prussia.

"Belgium has always been faithful to her international obligations, she has carried out her duties in a spirit of loyal impartiality, and she has left nothing undone to maintain and enforce respect for her neutrality.

"The attack upon her independence with which the German Government threaten her constitutes a flagrant violation of international law. No strategic interest justifies such a violation of law.

"The Belgian Government, if they were to accept the proposals submitted to them, would sacrifice the honour of the nation and betray their duty towards Europe.

"Conscious of the part which Belgium has played for more than eighty years in the civilisation of the world, they refuse to believe that the independence of Belgium can only be preserved at the price of the violation of her neutrality.

"If this hope is disappointed the Belgian Government are firmly resolved to repel, by all the means in their power, every attack upon their rights."

(Reply of the Belgian Government to the German Ultimatum.)

VIII. Statement of Von Bethmann-Hollweg

"Gentlemen, we are now in a state of necessity (*Notwehr*), and necessity (*Not*) knows no law. Our troops have occupied Luxemburg and perhaps have already entered Belgian territory.

"Gentlemen, that is a breach of international law. It is true that the French Government declared at Brussels that France would respect Belgian neutrality as long as her adversary respected it. We knew, however, that France stood ready for an invasion. France could wait, we could not. A French attack on our flank on the lower Rhine might have been disastrous. Thus we were forced to ignore the rightful protests of the Governments of Luxemburg and Belgium. The wrong—I speak openly—the wrong we thereby commit we will try to make good as soon as our military aims have been attained.

"He who is menaced as we are and is fighting for his highest possession can only consider how he is to hack his way through (*durchhauen*). . . .

"Gentlemen, so much for the facts. I repeat the words of the Emperor: 'With a clear conscience we enter the lists.'"

(From the speech of the Imperial Chancellor before the Reichstag, August 4th, 1914.)

IX. Sir Edward Goschen's Report Telegraphed August 4, 1914

"I found the Chancellor very agitated. His Excellency at once began a harangue, which lasted for about twenty minutes. He said that the step taken by His Majesty's Government was terrible to a degree; just for a word—'neutrality,' a word which in war time had so often been

disregarded—just for a scrap of paper Great Britain was going to make war on a kindred nation who desired nothing better than to be friends with her. All his efforts in that direction had been rendered useless by this last terrible step, and the policy to which, as I knew, he had devoted himself since his accession to office had tumbled down like a house of cards. What we had done was unthinkable; it was like striking a man from behind while he was fighting for his life against two assailants. He held Great Britain responsible for all the terrible events that might happen.

"I protested strongly against that statement, and said that, in the same way as he and Herr von Jagow wished me to understand that for strategical reasons it was a matter of life and death to Germany to advance through Belgium and violate the latter's neutrality, so I would wish him to understand that it was, so to speak, a matter of 'life and death' for the honour of Great Britain that she should keep her solemn engagement to do her utmost to defend Belgium's neutrality if attacked. That solemn compact simply had to be kept, or what confidence could any one have in engagements given by Great Britain in the future?"

(Extract from Sir E. Goschen's report telegraphed on 4th August, 1914, but not received by the Foreign Office, and re-written in London on 8th August. British White Paper, no. 160.)

X. Von Jagow to Baron Beyens

"The Belgian Minister had only spoken a few words when Herr von Jagow exclaimed:

"'You must understand that it is with the utmost grief that Germany has decided to violate the neutrality

of Belgium, and personally I feel the most poignant regret. But what could you expect? It is a question of life or death for the Empire. If the German armies do not want to be caught between the hammer and the anvil they must strike a decisive blow at France, in order then to turn back again against Russia.'

"'But,' said Baron Beyens, 'the frontiers of France are sufficiently extended to make it possible to avoid passing through Belgium.'

"'They are too strongly fortified. Besides, what is it that we are asking of you? Merely to allow us free passage, to refrain from destroying your railways and tunnels, and to let us occupy the fortified places that we need.'

"'There is,' replied the Belgian Minister at once, 'a very easy way of arriving at the only reply of which this demand could admit. It is to suppose that France had addressed the same invitation to us and we had acceded to it. Would not Germany have said that we had been guilty of a cowardly betrayal?'

"The Secretary of State did not answer this very pertinent question. Baron Beyens pursued:

"'At any rate,' he asked, 'have you anything to reproach us with? Have we not always, for three quarters of a century, fulfilled all the duties of our neutrality towards Germany, as towards all the other Great Powers who guaranteed it? Have we not given Germany evidence of loyal friendship? What return does Germany propose to make for that? To make Belgium the battlefield of Europe, and we know what devastation and disaster modern war brings in its train.'

"'Germany has nothing to reproach Belgium with and the attitude of Belgium has always been perfectly correct.'

"'You must recognise then,' replied Baron Beyens,

'that Belgium cannot give you any other reply than that which she has given without losing her honour. It is with nations as with individuals, and there is not one kind of honour for peoples and another for private folk. You must recognise,' insisted Baron Beyens, 'that the reply could not have been other than that which has been given.'

"'I recognise it as a private individual, but as Secretary of State I have no views to express.'"

(Last interview of Baron Beyens, Belgian Minister at Berlin, with Herr von Jagow, 3rd August. *Cf.* M. Waxweiler, "Neutral and Loyal Belgium.")

APPENDIX II*

EXTRACT FROM THE SPEECH OF CHANCELLOR VON BETHMANN-HOLLWEG IN THE GERMAN REICHSTAG, DECEMBER 12, 1916

. . . . . .

And Hindenburg does not rest. Military operations progress. By strokes of the sword at the same time firm foundations for our economic needs have been laid. Great stocks of grain, victuals, oil, and other goods fell into our hands in Roumania. Their transport has begun. In spite of scarcity, we could have lived on our own supplies, but now our safety is beyond question.

To these great events on land heroic deeds of equal importance are added by our submarines. The spectre of famine, which our enemies intended to appear before us, now pursues them without mercy. When, after the termination of the first year of the war, the Emperor addressed the nation in a public appeal, he said: "Having witnessed such great events, my heart was filled with

*In this appendix an attempt has been made to present in compact form some of the most important documents on peace terms and war issues put forth by governments or their accredited spokesmen. The material is so voluminous and in so many cases repeats its same points that it has been impossible to give every pronouncement *in toto*. In every instance care has been taken not to misrepresent the spirit of the statement by the omissions, and quotations are given in the words of the authors. The sources of the earlier documents are indicated, the later ones being taken from the files of the daily press, usually the *New York Times*.

awe and determination." Neither our Emperor nor our nation ever changed their minds in this respect.

. . . . . .

Our enemies now ascribed to us a plan to conquer the whole world, and then desperate cries of anguish for peace. But not confused by these asseverations, we progressed with firm decision, and we thus continue our progress, always ready to defend ourselves and fight for our nation's existence, for its free future, and always ready for this price to stretch out our hand for peace.

. . . . . .

PEACE NOTE OF GERMANY AND HER ALLIES, DECEMBER 12, 1916*

The most terrific war experienced in history has been raging for the last two years and a half over a large part of the world—a catastrophe which thousands of years of common civilization was unable to prevent and which injures the most precious achievements of humanity.

Our aims are not to shatter nor annihilate our adversaries. In spite of our consciousness of our military and economic strength and our readiness to continue the war (which has been forced upon us) to the bitter end, if necessary; at the same time, prompted by the desire to avoid further bloodshed and make an end to the atrocities of war, the four allied powers propose to enter forthwith into peace negotiations.

The propositions which they bring forward for such negotiations, and which have for their object a guarantee of the existence, of the honor and liberty of evolution for their nations, are, according to their firm belief, an appropriate basis for the establishment of a lasting peace.

* *The New York Times*, December 13, 1916.

The four allied powers have been obliged to take up arms to defend justice and the liberty of national evolution. The glorious deeds of our armies have in no way altered their purpose. We always maintained the firm belief that our own rights and justified claims in no way control the rights of these nations.

The spiritual and material progress which were the pride of Europe at the beginning of the twentieth century are threatened with ruin. Germany and her allies, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey, gave proof of their unconquerable strength in this struggle. They gained gigantic advantages over adversaries superior in number and war material. Our lines stand unshaken against ever-repeated attempts made by armies.

The last attack in the Balkans has been rapidly and victoriously overcome. The most recent events have demonstrated that further continuance of the war will not result in breaking the resistance of our forces, and the whole situation with regard to our troops justifies our expectation of further successes.

If, in spite of this offer of peace and reconciliation, the struggle should go on, the four allied powers are resolved to continue to a victorious end, but they solemnly disclaim responsibility for this before humanity and history. The Imperial Government, through the good offices of your Excellency, asks the Government of [here is inserted the name of the neutral power addressed in each instance] to bring this communication to the knowledge of the Government of [here are inserted the names of the belligerents].

EXTRACTS FROM THE SPEECH OF PREMIER BRIAND IN THE FRENCH CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES, DECEMBER 13, 1916*

. . . . . .

When I see Germany arming herself to the teeth, mobilizing her entire civil population at the risk of destroying her commerce and her industries, of breaking up her homes of which she is so proud; when I see the fires of all her factories burning red in the manufacture of war material; when I see her, in contravention of the law of nations, conscripting men in their own countries and forcing them to work for her, if I did not warn my country, I should be culpable indeed!

. . . . . .

There is one cry constantly on German lips: "We were attacked; we are defending ourselves; we are the victims!" To this cry I make answer for the hundredth time: "No; you are the aggressors; no matter what you may say, the facts are there to prove it. The blood is on your heads, not on ours."

Furthermore, the circumstances in which these proposals are made are such that I have the right to denounce them as a crafty move, a clumsy snare.

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The things I am telling you are merely my personal impressions. I would not be talking thus, were it not my duty to put my country on her guard against what might bring about her demoralization. It is not that I doubt her clear-sightedness or her perspicacity. I am quite sure that she will not allow herself to be duped.

* France: *Journal Officiel du* 14 *décembre* 1916, *Chambre—Séance du* 13 *décembre*, p. 3638.

But, nevertheless, even before the proposals are officially laid before us, I have the right to say to you that they are merely a ruse, an attempt to weaken the bonds of our alliance, to trouble the conscience and to undermine the courage of our people.

. . . . . .

RESOLUTION OF THE RUSSIAN DUMA AGAINST ACCEPTANCE OF THE GERMAN PEACE PROPOSALS, DECEMBER 15, 1916*

. . . . . .

It considers that a lasting peace will be possible only after a decisive victory over the military power of the enemy, and after the definite renunciation by Germany of the aspirations which render her responsible for the world war and for the horrors by which it is accompanied.

EXTRACT FROM THE SPEECH OF BARON SONNINO, ITALIAN MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, IN THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES, DECEMBER 18, 1916†

. . . . . .

We all desire a lasting peace, but we consider as such an ordered settlement of which the duration does not depend upon the strength of the chains binding one people to another, but on a just equilibrium between States and respect for the principle of nationality, the rights of nations, and reasons of humanity and civilization. While intensifying our efforts to beat the enemy,

* *The Times*, London, December 16, 1916.
† *The Times*, London, December 19, 1916.

we do not aim at an international settlement by servitude and predominance implying the annihilation of peoples and nations. If a serious proposal was made on a solid basis for negotiations satisfying the general demands of justice and civilization, no one would oppose an *a priori* refusal to treat, but many things indicate that that is not the case now. The tone of boasting and insincerity characterizing the preamble to the enemy notes inspires no confidence in the proposals of the Central Empires. The Governments of the Allies must avoid the creation for their populations by a false mirage of vain negotiations of an enormous deception, followed by cruel disappointment.

FROM PRESIDENT WILSON'S PEACE NOTE, DECEMBER 18, 1916

*The Secretary of State to Ambassador W. H. Page**

The President directs me to send you the following communication to be presented immediately to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Government to which you are accredited:

"The President of the United States has instructed me to suggest to His Majesty's Government a course of action with regard to the present war which he hopes that the British Government will take under consideration as suggested in the most friendly spirit and as coming not only from a friend but also as coming from the representative of a neutral nation whose interests have been most seriously affected by the war and whose concern

* Same *mutatis mutandis* to the American Diplomatic Representatives accredited to all the belligerent Governments and to all neutral Governments for their information.

for its early conclusion arises out of a manifest necessity to determine how best to safeguard those interests if the war is to continue.

. . . . . .

"He takes the liberty of calling attention to the fact that the objects which the statesmen of the belligerents on both sides have in mind in this war are virtually the same, as stated in general terms to their own people and to the world. Each side desires to make the rights and privileges of weak peoples and small States as secure against aggression or denial in the future as the rights and privileges of the great and powerful States now at war. Each wishes itself to be made secure in the future, along with all other nations and peoples, against the recurrence of wars like this and against aggression of selfish interference of any kind. Each would be jealous of the formation of any more rival leagues to preserve an uncertain balance of power amidst multiplying suspicions; but each is ready to consider the formation of a league of nations to insure peace and justice throughout the world. Before that final step can be taken, however, each deems it necessary first to settle the issues of the present war upon terms which will certainly safeguard the independence, the territorial integrity, and the political and commercial freedom of the nations involved.

. . . . . .

"The President is not proposing peace; he is not even offering mediation. He is merely proposing that soundings be taken in order that we may learn, the neutral nations with the belligerent, how near the haven of peace may be for which all mankind longs with an intense and increasing longing. He believes that the spirit in which he speaks and the objects which he seeks will be under-

stood by all concerned, and he confidently hopes for a response which will bring a new light into the affairs of the world."

EXTRACTS FROM THE SPEECH OF PREMIER LLOYD GEORGE IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, DECEMBER 19, 1916*

. . . . . .

We feel that we ought to know, before we can give favourable consideration to such an invitation, that Germany is prepared to accede to the only terms on which it is possible for peace to be obtained and maintained in Europe. What are those terms?

. . . . . .

"Restitution, reparation, guarantee against repetition" —so that there shall be no mistake, and it is important that there should be no mistake in a matter of life and death to millions.

Let me repeat again—complete restitution, full reparation, effectual guarantee. Did the German Chancellor use a single phrase to indicate that he was prepared to accept such a peace? Was there a hint of restitution, was there any suggestion of reparation, was there any invitation of any security for the future that this outrage on civilization would not be again perpetrated at the first profitable opportunity? The very substance and style of this speech constitutes a denial of peace on the only terms on which peace is possible. He is not even conscious now that Germany has committed any offence against the rights of free nations.

. . . . . .

* *The Times*, London, December 20, 1916.

This note and that speech prove that not yet have they learned the very alphabet of respect for the rights of others. Without reparation, peace is impossible. Are all these outrages against humanity on land and on sea to be liquidated by a few pious phrases about humanity? Is there to be no reckoning for them? Are we to grasp the hand that perpetrated these atrocities in friendship without any reparation being tendered or given? I am told that we are to begin, Germany helping us, to exact reparation for all future violence committed after the war. We have begun already. It has already cost us so much, and we must exact it now so as not to leave such a grim inheritance to our children. As much as we all long for peace, deeply as we are horrified with war, this note and the speech which heralded it do not afford us much encouragement and hope for an honourable and lasting peace. What hope is given in that speech that the whole root and cause of this great bitterness, the arrogant spirit of the Prussian military caste, will not be as dominant as ever if we patch up peace now?

. . . . . .

All our hopes proved illusory, and now that this great war has been forced by the Prussian military leaders upon France, Russia, Italy, and ourselves, it would be folly, it would be a cruel folly, not to see to it that this swashbuckling through the streets of Europe to the disturbance of all harmless and peaceful citizens shall be dealt with now as an offence against the law of nations. The mere word that led Belgium to her own destruction will not satisfy Europe any more. We all believed it. We all trusted it. It gave way at the first pressure of temptation, and Europe has been plunged into the vortex of blood.

We will therefore wait until we hear what terms and guarantees the German Government offer other than those, better than those, surer than those, which she so lightly broke. Meantime, we shall put our trust in an unbroken Army rather than in a broken faith.

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GERMAN REPLY TO PRESIDENT WILSON'S PEACE NOTE, DECEMBER 26, 1916

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"With reference to the esteemed communication of December 21, Foreign Office No. 15118, the undersigned has the honor to reply as follows: To His Excellency the Ambassador of the United States of America, Mr. James W. Gerard.

"The Imperial Government has accepted and considered in the friendly spirit which is apparent in the communication of the President, noble initiative of the President looking to the creation of bases for the foundation of a lasting peace. The President discloses the aim which lies next to his heart and leaves the choice of the way open. A direct exchange of views appears to the Imperial Government as the most suitable way of arriving at the desired result. The Imperial Government has the honor, therefore, in the sense of its declaration of the 12th instant, which offered the hand for peace negotiations, to propose the speedy assembly, on neutral ground, of delegates of the warring States.

"It is also the view of the Imperial Government that the great work for the prevention of future wars can first be taken up only after the ending of the present conflict of exhaustion. The Imperial Government is ready, when

this point has been reached, to cooperate with the United States at this sublime task.

"The undersigned, while permitting himself to have recourse to good offices of His Excellency the Ambassador in connection with the transmission of the above reply to the President of the United States, avails himself of this opportunity to renew the assurances of his highest consideration.

"ZIMMERMANN."

Austro-Hungarian Reply of the same date was in the same tenor.

ENTENTE REPLY TO PRESIDENT WILSON'S PEACE NOTE, JANUARY 10, 1917*

Ambassador Sharp to the Secretary of State

[TELEGRAM]

AMERICAN EMBASSY,
Paris, January 10, 1917.

The following is the translation of the French note:

"The Allied Governments have received the note which was delivered to them in the name of the Government of the United States on the nineteenth of December, 1916. They have studied it with the care imposed upon them both by the exact realization which they have of the gravity of the hour and by the sincere friendship which attaches them to the American people.

"In general way they wish to declare that they pay tribute to the elevation of the sentiment with which the American note is inspired and that they associate themselves with all their hopes with the project for the creation of a league of nations to insure peace and justice

* Official print of the Department of State.

throughout the world. They recognize all the advantages for the cause of humanity and civilization which the institution of international agreements, destined to avoid violent conflicts between nations would prevent; agreements which must imply the sanctions necessary to insure their execution and thus to prevent an apparent security from only facilitating new aggressions. But a discussion of future arrangements destined to insure an enduring peace presupposes a satisfactory settlement of the actual conflict; the Allies have as profound a desire as the Government of the United States to terminate as soon as possible a war for which the Central Empires are responsible and which inflicts such cruel sufferings upon humanity. But they believe that it is impossible at the present moment to attain a peace which will assure them reparation, restitution and such guarantees to which they are entitled by the aggression for which the responsibility rests with the Central Powers and of which the principle itself tended to ruin the security of Europe; a peace which would on the other hand permit the establishment of the future of European nations on a solid basis. The Allied nations are conscious that they are not fighting for selfish interests, but above all to safeguard the independence of peoples, of right and of humanity.

. . . . . .

"President Wilson desires more: he desires that the belligerent powers openly affirm the objects which they seek by continuing the war; the Allies experience no difficulty in replying to this request. Their objects in the war are well known; they have been formulated on many occasions by the chiefs of their divers Governments. Their objects in the war will not be made known in detail with all the equitable compensations and indem-

nities for damages suffered until the hour of negotiations. But the civilized world knows that they imply in all necessity and in the first instance the restoration of Belgium, of Servia, and of Montenegro and the indemnities which are due them; the evacuation of the invaded territories of France, of Russia and of Roumania with just reparation; the reorganization of Europe guaranteed by a stable *régime* and founded as much upon respect of nationalities and full security and liberty for economic development, which all nations, great or small, possess, as upon territorial conventions and international agreements suitable to guarantee territorial and maritime frontiers against unjustified attacks; the restitution of provinces or territories wrested in the past from the Allies by force or against the will of their populations, the liberation of Italians, of Slavs, of Roumanians and of Tcheco Slovaques from foreign domination; the enfranchisement of populations subject to the bloody tyranny of the Turks; the expulsion from Europe of the Ottoman Empire decidedly (. . .)* to western civilization. The intentions of His Majesty the Emperor of Russia regarding Poland have been clearly indicated in the proclamation which he has just addressed to his armies. It goes without saying that if the Allies wish to liberate Europe from the brutal covetousness of Prussian militarism, it never has been their design, as has been alleged, to encompass the extermination of the German peoples and their political disappearance. That which they desire above all is to insure a peace upon the principles of liberty and justice, upon the inviolable fidelity to international obligation with which the Government of the United States has never ceased to be inspired.

* Apparent omission.

"United in the pursuits of this supreme object the Allies are determined, individually and collectively, to act with all their power and to consent to all sacrifices to bring to a victorious close a conflict upon which they are convinced not only their own safety and prosperity depends but also the future of civilization itself."

BELGIAN NOTE SUPPLEMENTARY TO THE ENTENTE REPLY TO PRESIDENT WILSON'S PEACE NOTE, JANUARY 10, 1917

. . . . . .

But the President seems to believe that the statesmen of the two opposing camps pursue the same objects of war. The example of Belgium unfortunately demonstrates that this is in no wise the fact. Belgium has never, like the Central Powers, aimed at conquests. The barbarous fashion in which the German Government has treated, and is still treating, the Belgian nation, does not permit the supposition that Germany will preoccupy herself with guaranteeing in the future the rights of the weak nations which she has not ceased to trample under foot since the war, let loose by her, began to desolate Europe.

. . . . . .

PEACE RESOLUTION OF THE GERMAN REICHSTAG

Adopted July 19, 1917

As on Aug. 4, 1914, so on the threshold of the fourth year of the war the German people stand upon the assurance of the speech from the throne—"We are driven by no lust of conquest."

Germany took up arms in defense of its liberty and independence and for the integrity of its territories. The Reichstag labors for peace and a mutual understanding and lasting reconciliation among the nations. Forced acquisitions of territory and political, economic, and financial violations are incompatible with such a peace.

The Reichstag rejects all plans aiming at an economic blockade and the stirring up of enmity among the peoples after the war. The freedom of the seas must be assured. Only an economic peace can prepare the ground for the friendly association of the peoples.

The Reichstag will energetically promote the creation of international juridical organizations. So long, however, as the enemy Governments do not accept such a peace, so long as they threaten Germany and her allies with conquest and violation, the German people will stand together as one man, hold out unshaken, and fight until the rights of itself and its allies to life and development are secured. The German Nation united is unconquerable.

The Reichstag knows that in this announcement it is at one with the men who are defending the Fatherland. In their heroic struggles they are sure of the undying thanks of the whole people.

REPLY TO THE POPE'S PEACE PROPOSALS

AUGUST 27, 1917.

To His Holiness Benedictus XV, Pope:

In acknowledgment of the communication of Your Holiness to the belligerent peoples, dated August 1, 1917, the President of the United States requests me to transmit the following reply:

His Holiness in substance proposes that we return to

the *status quo ante bellum*, and that then there be a general condonation, disarmament, and a concert of nations based upon an acceptance of the principle of arbitration; that by a similar concert freedom of the seas be established; and that the territorial claims of France and Italy, the perplexing problems of the Balkan States, and the restitution of Poland, be left to such conciliatory adjustments as may be possible in the new temper of such a peace, due regard being paid to the aspirations of the peoples whose political fortunes and affiliations will be involved.

It is manifest that no part of this program can be successfully carried out unless the restitution of the *status quo ante* furnishes a firm and satisfactory basis for it. The object of this war is to deliver the free peoples of the world from the menace and the actual power of a vast military establishment controlled by an irresponsible Government which, having secretly planned to dominate the world, proceeded to carry the plan out without regard either to the sacred obligations of treaty or the long-established practices and long-cherished principles of international action and honor; which chose its own time for the war; delivered its blow fiercely and suddenly; stopped at no barrier either of law or of mercy; swept a whole continent within the tide of blood—not the blood of soldiers only, but the blood of innocent women and children also and of the helpless poor; and now stands balked but not defeated, the enemy of four-fifths of the world. This power is not the German people. It is the ruthless master of the German people. It is no business of ours how that great people came under its control or submitted with temporary zest to the domination of its purpose; but it is our business to see to it that the

history of the rest of the world is no longer left to its handling.

To deal with such a power by way of peace upon the plan proposed by His Holiness the Pope would, so far as we can see, involve a recuperation of its strength and a renewal of its policy; would make it necessary to create a permanent hostile combination of nations against the German people, who are its instruments; and would result in abandoning the new-born Russia to the intrigue, the manifold subtle interference, and the certain counter-revolution which would be attempted by all the malign influences to which the German Government has of late accustomed the world. Can peace be based upon a restitution of its power or upon any word of honor it could pledge in a treaty of settlement and accommodation?

Responsible statesmen must now everywhere see, if they never saw before, that no peace can rest securely upon political or economic restrictions meant to benefit some nations and cripple or embarrass others, upon vindictive action of any sort, or any kind of revenge or deliberate injury. The American people have suffered intolerable wrongs at the hands of the Imperial German Government, but they desire no reprisal upon the German people, who have themselves suffered all things in this war, which they did not choose. They believe that peace should rest upon the rights of peoples, not the rights of governments—the rights of peoples great or small, weak or powerful—their equal right to freedom and security and self-government and to a participation upon fair terms in the economic opportunities of the world, the German people of course included if they will accept equality and not seek domination.

The test, therefore, of every plan of peace is this: Is

it based upon the faith of all the peoples involved or merely upon the word of an ambitious and intriguing government, on the one hand, and of a group of free peoples, on the other? This is a test which goes to the root of the matter; and it is the test which must be applied.

The purposes of the United States in this war are known to the whole world, to every people to whom the truth has been permitted to come. They do not need to be stated again. We seek no material advantage of any kind. We believe that the intolerable wrongs done in this war by the furious and brutal power of the Imperial German Government ought to be repaired, but not at the expense of the sovereignty of any people—rather a vindication of the sovereignty both of those that are weak and of those that are strong. Punitive damages, the dismemberment of empires, the establishment of selfish and exclusive economic leagues, we deem inexpedient and in the end worse than futile, no proper basis for a peace of any kind, least of all for an enduring peace. That must be based upon justice and fairness and the common rights of mankind.

We cannot take the word of the present rulers of Germany as a guarantee of anything that is to endure, unless explicitly supported by such conclusive evidence of the will and purpose of the German people themselves as the other peoples of the world would be justified in accepting. Without such guarantees treaties of settlement, agreements for disarmament, covenants to set up arbitration in the place of force, territorial adjustments, reconstitution of small nations, if made with the German Government, no man, no nation could now depend on. We must await some new evidence of the purposes of the

great peoples of the Central Powers. God grant it may be given soon and in a way to restore the confidence of all peoples everywhere in the faith of nations and the possibility of a covenanted peace.

ROBERT LANSING,
Secretary of State of the United States of America.

A JUST AND GENEROUS PEACE

(From Annual Message to Congress, December 4, 1917.)

I believe that I speak for them [the American people] when I say two things: First, that this intolerable thing of which the masters of Germany have shown us the ugly face, this menace of combined intrigue and force which we now see so clearly as the German power, a thing without conscience or honor or capacity for covenanted peace, must be crushed, and if it be not utterly brought to an end, at least shut out from the friendly intercourse of the nations; and, second, that when this thing and its power are indeed defeated and the time comes that we can discuss peace—when the German people have spokesmen whose word we can believe, and when those spokesmen are ready in the name of their people to accept the common judgment of the nations as to what shall henceforth be the bases of law and of covenant for the life of the world—we shall be willing and glad to pay the full price for peace, and pay it ungrudgingly. We know what that price will be. It will be full, impartial justice—justice done at every point and to every nation that the final settlement must affect, our enemies as well as our friends.

You catch, with me, the voices of humanity that are in the air. They grow daily more audible, more articulate, more persuasive, and they come from the hearts of

men everywhere. They insist that the war shall not end in vindictive action of any kind; that no nation or people shall be robbed or punished because the irresponsible rulers of a single country have themselves done deep and abominable wrong. It is this thought that has been expressed in the formula, "No annexations, no contributions, no punitive indemnities." Just because this crude formula expresses the instinctive judgment as to right of plain men everywhere, it has been made diligent use of by the masters of German intrigue to lead the people of Russia astray—and the people of every other country their agents could reach—in order that a premature peace might be brought about before autocracy has been taught its final and convincing lesson, and the people of the world put in control of their own destinies. . . .

Let there be no misunderstanding. Our present and immediate task is to win the war, and nothing shall turn us aside from it until it is accomplished. Every power and resource we possess, whether of men, of money, or materials, is being devoted and will continue to be devoted to that purpose until it is achieved. Those who desire to bring peace about before that purpose is achieved I counsel to carry their advice elsewhere. We will not entertain it. We shall regard the war as won only when the German people say to us, through properly accredited representatives, that they are ready to agree to a settlement based upon justice and the reparation of the wrongs their rulers have done. They have done a wrong to Belgium which must be repaired. They have established a power over other lands and peoples than their own—over the great Empire of Austria-Hungary, over hitherto free Balkan States, over Turkey, and within Asia—which must be relinquished. . . .

The people of Germany are being told by the men whom they now permit to deceive them and to act as their masters, that they are fighting for the very life and existence of their Empire, a war of desperate self-defense against deliberate aggression. Nothing could be more grossly or wantonly false, and we must seek by the utmost openness and candor as to our real aims to convince them of its falseness. We are in fact fighting for their emancipation from fear, along with our own—from the fear as well as from the fact of unjust attack by neighbors or rivals or schemers after world empire. No one is threatening the existence or the independence or the peaceful enterprise of the German Empire.

The worst that can happen to the detriment of the German people is this, that if they should still, after the war is over, continue to be obliged to live under ambitious and intriguing masters interested to disturb the peace of the world—men or classes of men whom the other peoples of the world could not trust—it might be impossible to admit them to the partnership of nations which must henceforth guarantee the world's peace. That partnership must be a partnership of peoples, not a mere partnership of governments. It might be impossible, also, in such untoward circumstances, to admit Germany to the free economic intercourse which must inevitably spring out of the other partnerships of a real peace. But there would be no aggression in that; and such a situation, inevitable because of distrust, would in the very nature of things sooner or later cure itself, by processes which would assuredly set in.

We can do this with all the greater zeal and enthusiasm because we know that for us this is a war of high principle, debased by no selfish ambition of conquest or spoliation;

because we know, and all the world knows, that we have been forced into it to save the very institutions we live under from corruption and destruction. The purposes of the Central Powers strike straight at the very heart of everything we believe in; their methods of warfare outrage every principle of humanity and of knightly honor; their intrigue has corrupted the very thought and spirit of many of our people; their sinister and secret diplomacy has sought to take our very territory away from us and disrupt the Union of the States. Our safety would be at an end, our honor forever sullied and brought into contempt, were we to permit their triumph. They are striking at the very existence of democracy and liberty.

It is because it is for us a war of high, disinterested purpose, in which all the free peoples of the world are banded together for the vindication of right, a war for the preservation of our Nation and of all that it has held dear of principle and of purpose, that we feel ourselves doubly constrained to propose for its outcome only that which is righteous and of irreproachable intention, for our foes as well as for our friends. The cause being just and holy, the settlement must be of like motive and quality. For this we can fight, but for nothing less noble or less worthy of our traditions. For this cause we entered the war and for this cause will we battle until the last gun is fired.

FROM PROGRAM OF THE WORLD'S PEACE

(Address to Congress, January 8, 1918)

We entered this war because violations of right had occurred which touched us to the quick and made the life of our own people impossible unless they were cor-

rected and the world secured once for all against their recurrence. What we demand in this war, therefore, is nothing peculiar to ourselves. It is that the world be made fit and safe to live in; and particularly that it be made safe for every peace-loving nation which, like our own, wishes to live its own life, determine its own institutions, be assured of justice and fair dealing by the other peoples of the world as against force and selfish aggression. All the peoples of the world are, in effect, partners in this interest, and for our own part we see very clearly that unless justice be done to others it will not be done to us. The program of the world's peace, therefore, is our program; and that program, the only possible program, as we see it, is this:

I. Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at; after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind, but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view.

II. Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas, outside territorial waters, alike in peace and in war, except as the seas may be closed in whole or in part by international action for the enforcement of international covenants.

III. The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the peace and associating themselves for its maintenance.

IV. Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety.

V. A free, open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the populations concerned must

have equal weight with the equitable claims of the Government whose title is to be determined.

VI. The evacuation of all Russian territory, and such a settlement of all questions affecting Russia as will secure the best and freest co-operation of the other nations of the world in obtaining for her an unhampered and unembarrassed opportunity for the independent determination of her own political development and national policy, and assure her of a sincere welcome into the society of free nations under institutions of her own choosing; and, more than a welcome, assistance also of every kind that she may need and may herself desire. The treatment accorded Russia by her sister nations in the months to come will be the acid test of their good will, of their comprehension of her needs as distinguished from their own interests, and of their intelligent and unselfish sympathy.

VII. Belgium, the whole world will agree, must be evacuated and restored without any attempt to limit the sovereignty which she enjoys in common with all other free nations. No other single act will serve as this will serve to restore confidence among the nations in the laws which they have themselves set and determined for the government of their relations with one another. Without this healing act the whole structure and validity of international law is forever impaired.

VIII. All French territory should be freed and the invaded portions restored; and the wrong done to France by Prussia in 1871 *in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine, which has unsettled the peace of the world for nearly fifty years, should be righted, in order that peace may once more be made secure in the interest of all.*

IX. A readjustment of the frontiers of Italy should be effected along clearly recognizable lines of nationality.

X. The peoples of Austria-Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity of autonomous development.

XI. Roumania, Serbia, and Montenegro should be evacuated; occupied territories restored; Serbia accorded free and secure access to the sea; and the relations of the several Balkan States to one another determined by friendly counsel along historically established lines of allegiance and nationality; and international guaranties of the political and economic independence and territorial integrity of the several Balkan States should be entered into.

XII. The Turkish portions of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development, and the Dardanelles should be permanently opened as a free passage to the ships and commerce of all nations under international guaranties.

XIII. An independent Polish State should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea, and whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenant.

XIV. A general association of nations must be formed, under specific covenants, for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small States alike.

In regard to these essential rectifications of wrong and assertions of right we feel ourselves to be intimate partners of all the Governments and peoples associated together against the imperialists. We cannot be separated in in-

terest or divided in purpose. We stand together until the end.

For such arrangements and covenants we are willing to fight, and to continue to fight, until they are achieved; but only because we wish the right to prevail and desire a just and stable peace, such as can be secured only by removing the chief provocations to war, which this program does remove. We have no jealousy of German greatness, and there is nothing in this program that impairs it. We grudge her no achievement or distinction of learning or of specific enterprise, such as have made her record very bright and very enviable. We do not wish to injure her or to block in any way her legitimate influence or power. We do not wish to fight her either with arms or with hostile arrangements of trade, if she is willing to associate herself with us and the other peace-loving nations of the world in covenants of justice and law and fair dealing. We wish her only to accept a place of equality among the peoples of the world—the new world in which we now live—instead of a place of mastery.

Neither do we presume to suggest to her any alteration or modification of her institutions. But it is necessary, we must frankly say, and necessary as a preliminary to any intelligent dealings with her on our part, that we should know whom her spokesmen speak for when they speak to us, whether for the Reichstag majority or for the military party and the men whose creed is imperial domination.

We have spoken now, surely, in terms too concrete to admit of any further doubt or question. An evident principle runs through the whole program I have outlined. It is the principle of justice to all peoples and nationalities, and their right to live on equal terms of

liberty and safety with one another, whether they be strong or weak. Unless this principle be made its foundation no part of the structure of international justice can stand. The people of the United States could act upon no other principle; and to the vindication of this principle they are ready to devote their lives, their honor, and everything that they possess. The moral climax of this the culminating and final war for human liberty has come, and they are ready to put their own strength, their own highest purpose, their own integrity and devotion to the test.

FROM THE GERMAN CHANCELLOR'S REPLY TO AMERICA AND GREAT BRITAIN *

[Delivered before the Reichstag Main Committee, by Count von Hertling, January 24, 1918.]

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The Russians† last month proposed to issue an invitation to all the belligerents to participate in the negotiations. Russia submitted certain proposals of a very general character. At that time we accepted the proposal to invite the belligerents to take part in the negotiations, on the condition, however, that the invitation should have a definite period for its acceptance. At 10 o'clock on the evening of January 4 the period expired. No answer had come, and as a result we were no longer under obligations and had a free hand for separate peace negotiations with Russia. Neither were we longer bound,

* *New York Times Current History*, March, 1918, pp. 389–394.

† The peace was made, not with the Russian people or their representatives, but with the leaders of the Bolshevik party who had overthrown the Kerensky government and dispersed the delegates to the Constituent Assembly.

of course, by the general peace proposals submitted to us by the Russian delegation.

Instead of the reply which was expected but which was not forthcoming, two declarations were made by enemy statesmen—Lloyd George's speech and President Wilson's speech.

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And Alsace-Lorraine, of which Lloyd George speaks again? He speaks of the wrong Germany did in 1871 to France. Alsace-Lorraine—you need not be told, but abroad they appear still to be ignorant of things—Alsace-Lorraine comprises, as is known, for the most part purely German regions which by a century of violence and illegality were severed from the German Empire, until finally the French Revolution swallowed up the last remnant. Alsace and Lorraine then became French provinces.

When, in the war of 1870, we demanded back the districts which had been criminally wrested from us, that was not a conquest of foreign territory, but, rightly and properly speaking, what to-day is called disannexation. This disannexation was then expressly recognized by the French National Assembly, the constitutional representatives of the French people at that time, March 29, 1871, by a large majority of votes.

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I now come to President Wilson. Here, too, I recognize that the tone appears to have changed. The unanimous rejection of Mr. Wilson's attempt, in reply to the Pope's note, to sow discord between the German Government and the German people has had its effect. This unanimous rejection might of itself lead Mr. Wilson on the right path. A beginning to that end has perhaps

been made, for now there is at any rate no longer talk about oppression of the German people by an autocratic Government, and the former attacks on the House of Hohenzollern have not been repeated.

I will not enlarge upon the distorted representation of German policy which is contained in Mr. Wilson's message, but will deal in detail with the points which Mr. Wilson lays down there—not less than fourteen points, in which he formulates his peace program—and I pray your indulgence in dealing with these as briefly as possible.

The first point is the demand that there shall be no more secret international agreements. History shows that it is we above all others who would be able to agree to the publicity of diplomatic documents. I recall that our defensive alliance with Austria-Hungary was known to the whole world from 1888, while the offensive agreement of the enemy States first saw the light of publicity during the war, through the revelations of the secret Russian archives. The negotiations at Brest-Litovsk are being conducted with full publicity. This proves that we are quite ready to accept this proposal and declare publicity of negotiations to be a general political principle.

In his second point Mr. Wilson demands freedom of shipping on the seas in war and peace. This also is demanded by Germany as the first and one of the most important requirements for the future. Therefore, there is here no difference of opinion. The limitation introduced by Mr. Wilson at the end, which I need not quote textually, is not intelligible, appears superfluous, and would therefore best be left out.

[The limiting clause reads: "except as the seas may be closed in whole or in part by international action for the enforcement of international covenants."]

It would, however, be highly important for the freedom of shipping in future if strongly fortified naval bases on important international routes, such as England has at Gibraltar, Malta, Aden, Hongkong, the Falkland Islands, and many other places, were removed.

Point 3. We, too, are in thorough accord with the removal of economic barriers which interfere with trade in a superfluous manner. We, too, condemn economic war which would inevitably bear within it causes of future warlike complications.

Point 4. Limitation of armaments: As already declared by us, the idea of limitation of armaments is entirely discussable. The financial position of all European States after the war might most effectively promote a satisfactory solution. It is therefore clear that an understanding might be reached without difficulty on the first four points of Mr. Wilson's program.

I now come to the fifth point—settlement of all colonial claims and disputes. Practical realization of Mr. Wilson's principles in the realm of reality will encounter some difficulties in any case. I believe that for the present it may be left for England, which has the greatest colonial empire, to make what she will of this proposal of her ally. This point of the program also will have to be discussed in due time, on the reconstitution of the world's colonial possessions, which we also demand absolutely.

Point 6. Evacuation of Russian territory: Now that the Entente has refused, within the period agreed upon by Russia and the Quadruple Alliance, to join in the negotiations, I must in the name of the latter decline to allow any subsequent interference. We are dealing here with questions which concern only Russia and the four allied powers. I adhere to the hope that, with recogni-

tion of self-determination for the peoples on the western frontier of the former Russian Empire, good relations will be established, both with these peoples and with the rest of Russia, for whom we wish most earnestly a return of order, peace, and conditions guaranteeing the welfare of the country.

Point 7. Belgium: My predecessors in office repeatedly declared that at no time did the annexation of Belgium to Germany form a point in the program of German policy. The Belgian question belongs to those questions the details of which are to be settled by negotiation at the peace conference. So long as our opponents have unreservedly taken the standpoint that the integrity of the Allies' territory can offer the only possible basis of peace discussion, I must adhere to the standpoint hitherto always adopted and refuse the removal in advance of the Belgian affair from the entire discussion.

Point 8. The occupied parts of France are a valuable pawn in our hands. Here, too, forcible annexation forms no part of the official German policy. The conditions and methods of procedure of the evacuation, which must take account of Germany's vital interests, are to be agreed upon between Germany and France.

I can only again expressly accentuate the fact that there can never be a question of the dismemberment of imperial territory. Under no fine phrases of any kind shall we permit the enemy again to take from us territory of the empire which with ever increasing intimacy has linked itself to Germanism, which has in highly gratifying manner ever and increasingly developed in an economic respect, and of whose people more than 87 per cent speak the German mother tongue.

The questions dealt with by Mr. Wilson under Points

9, 10, and 11 touch both the Italian frontier question and questions of the future development of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and the future of the Balkan States; questions in which, for the greater part, the interests of our ally, Austria-Hungary, preponderate. Where German interests are concerned we shall defend them most energetically.

But I may leave the answer to Mr. Wilson's proposals on these points in the first place to the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister. Close contact with the allied Dual Monarchy forms the kernel of our present policy, and must be the guiding line in the future. Loyal comradeship in arms, which has stood the test so brilliantly in wartime, must continue to have its effect in peace. We shall thus on our part do everything for the attainment of peace by Austria-Hungary which takes into account her just claims.

The matters touched upon by Mr. Wilson in Point 12 concern our loyal, brave ally, Turkey. I must in nowise forestall her statesmen in their attitude. The integrity of Turkey and the safeguarding of her capital, which is connected closely with the question of the strait, are important and vital interests of the German Empire also. Our ally can always count upon our energetic support in this matter.

Point 13 deals with Poland. It was not the Entente—which had only empty words for Poland and before the war never interceded for Poland with Russia—but the German Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy which liberated Poland from the Czaristic régime which was crushing her national characteristics. It may thus be left to Germany and Austria-Hungary and Poland to come to an agreement on the future constitution of this

country. As the negotiations and communications of the last year prove, we are on the road to this goal.

The last point, the 14th, deals with a bond of the nations. Regarding this point, I am sympathetically disposed, as my political activity shows, toward every idea which eliminates for the future a possibility or a probability of war, and will promote a peaceful and harmonious collaboration of nations. If the idea of a bond of nations, as suggested by President Wilson, proves on closer examination really to be conceived in a spirit of complete justice and complete impartiality toward all, then the Imperial Government is gladly ready, when all other pending questions have been settled, to begin the examination of the basis of such a bond of nations.

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FROM COUNT CZERNIN'S REPLY ON BEHALF OF AUSTRIA-HUNGARY*

[Delivered before the Austrian Parliament, Jan. 24, 1918.]

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In advance let it be said that the basis on which Austria-Hungary treats with the various newly created Russian Governments is that of no indemnities or annexations. That is the program which I stated briefly to those who wanted to speak about peace after my nomination as Minister, which I have repeated to the Russian people in power on their first offer of peace, and from which I will not deviate.

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I have been strengthened in this view by the peace offer which the President of the United States of America has made. To the whole world this is a peace offer, for

* *New York Times Current History*, March, 1918, pp. 394–399.

in fourteen points Mr. Wilson develops the basis on which he attempts to bring about general peace.

It is evident that no such offer can be an elaboration acceptable in all details. Should this be the case, negotiations would be unnecessary, for then peace might be made by simple acceptance—by a simple yes and amen. That, of course, is not the case. But I do not hesitate to say that I find in the last proposals of President Wilson considerable approach to the Austro-Hungarian point of view, and among his proposals are some to which we can agree with pleasure.

If I shall now be allowed to discuss these proposals in greater detail I must say two things in advance: As far as those proposals relate to our allies—and in them there is mention of the German holding of Belgium and of the Turkish Empire—I declare that, faithful to the duties of the alliance which I have accepted, I am determined to go to every extreme in defense of our allies. The state of the property of our allies before the war we shall defend as our own. This is the point of view of the Allies in complete reciprocity.

Secondly, I should say that I must refuse politely but definitely any advice as to our internal government. We have a Parliament in Austria, elected by common, equal, direct, and secret suffrage. There is no more democratic Parliament on earth, and this Parliament, in conjunction with other constitutionally authorized factors, alone has the right to decide the internal affairs of Austria. I speak only of Austria because I am speaking in the Austrian delegation and not about the general affairs of the Hungarian State. I should not consider that constitutional. We do not interfere in American affairs, and we wish as little foreign guardianship by any

other State. Having said this in advance, I allow myself to answer the remaining points as follows:

I have nothing to say on the point which discusses abolishing secret diplomacy and complete publicity of negotiations. As for the question of publicity of negotiations, nothing can be said against this method from my point of view as far as it is based on complete reciprocity, although I have serious doubts whether it is always the most practical and quickest way to reach a result.

Diplomatic treaties are nothing but business affairs. I can easily think of cases, for instance, when commercial treaties are being made between States, and when it would be undesirable that the incomplete results should be told to the whole world beforehand.

In such negotiations both sides naturally begin by making as large as possible demands and by using one desire after another as compensation until that balance of interest is present which must be reached to make the conclusion of a treaty possible.

Should such negotiations be conducted before the eyes of the general public, it could not be avoided that the public should passionately take sides for every single one of the demands, so that the renunciation of such a demand, even if made only for tactical reasons, would be considered a defeat.

Should the public take sides especially strongly for one desideratum, then the conclusion of a treaty might become impossible, or the treaty, should it be concluded, might be felt as a defeat perhaps on both sides. This would not further peaceful relations, and the points of friction between the States would be increased. But what is valid for commercial treaties would be just as valid for political ones which treat of political business.

If abolishing secret diplomacy means that there are to be no secret treaties—that treaties shall not be made without the knowledge of the public—I have nothing to say against the realization of this. How the realization of this principle and its safeguard is to be considered I know not. When the Governments of two States agree, they will always be able to make secret treaties without any one discovering it. But these are minor points. I do not stick to formulas and will never be responsible for the failure of reasonable arrangement because of more or less formalities. We can, therefore, dismiss Point 1.

Point 2 relates to the freedom of the seas. In this postulate President Wilson has spoken from the heart of all, and I subscribe to this desire of America's completely, especially because the President adds the clause: "Outside territorial waters," that is, freedom of open sea. But I cannot subscribe to the violation of the sovereign rights of our faithful Turkish ally. Its point of view on this question will be ours.

Point 3, definitely against future economic war, is so just and so reasonable and has been so often demanded by us that I have nothing to add to it.

Point 4, demanding general disarmament, explains in especially good and clear style the necessity of forcing free competition in armaments after war to a point which the domestic safety of States demands. President Wilson explains this clearly. I permitted myself to develop the same a few months ago in a Budapest speech. It is part of my political creed.

As far as Russia is concerned, we are proving with deeds that we are ready to create a friendly, neighborly relationship.

As far as Italy, Serbia, Rumania, and Montenegro are

concerned, I can only repeat the point of view which I have expressed already in the Hungarian delegation.

I refuse to figure as surety for enemy war adventures. I refuse to make one-sided concessions to our enemies who remain stubbornly on the point of view of war to final victory, concessions which would forever injure the monarchy and give immeasurable advantage to our enemies and drag on the war indefinitely.

I trust Mr. Wilson will use the great influence he doubtless has on all his allies that they explain conditions on which they are willing to negotiate, and he will have gained the immeasurable merit of having called a general peace conference to life.

Just as openly and freely as I am here replying to President Wilson, I will also speak to all those who desire to speak themselves, but it is quite comprehensible that the time and continuation of the war cannot remain without influence on our relations in this connection.

I said this once before, and may refer to Italy as an example. Italy had the opportunity before the war to attain great territorial acquisitions without a shot. She refused, entered the war, lost hundreds of thousands of dead, billions in war costs and destroyed property, brought upon her population misery and need, and all this only for advantages which she could have had once, but which are now lost forever.

Regarding Point 13, it is an open secret that we are supporters of the idea that there must be "an independent Polish State," which shall "include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations." Regarding this, I am also of the opinion that we could soon reach an agreement with Mr. Wilson.

Nor will the President find anywhere in the Austro-

Hungarian Monarchy any opposition to his proposal regarding the idea of the league of nations.

As may be seen, then, from this comparison of my views with those of Mr. Wilson, we agree not only on great principles in general, according to which the world is to be newly regulated after the end of this war, but our views also approach each other on several concrete peace questions. The remaining differences do not seem to me great enough to lead to the belief that a discussion at this point should not bring clearness and rapprochement.

This situation, which probably arises from the fact that Austria-Hungary and the United States of America are the two great powers among the two groups of enemy States whose interests least conflict, suggests the thought that an exchange of ideas between these two powers might be the starting point for conciliatory discussions between all States which have not entered into peace conversations. So much for President Wilson's propositions.

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PRESIDENT WILSON'S REPLY TO CHANCELLOR VON HERTLING AND COUNT CZERNIN

(Address to Congress, February 11, 1918.)

Gentlemen of the Congress:

On the 8th of January I had the honor of addressing you on the objects of the war as our people conceive them. The Prime Minister of Great Britain had spoken in similar terms on the 5th of January. To these addresses the German Chancellor replied on the 24th, and Count Czernin for Austria on the same day. It is gratifying to have our desire so promptly realized that all exchanges of view

on this great matter should be made in the hearing of all the world.

Count Czernin's reply, which is directed chiefly to my own address of the 8th of January, is uttered in a very friendly tone.

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Count von Hertling's reply is, I must say, very vague and very confusing. It is full of equivocal phrases and leads, it is not clear, where. But it is certainly in a very different tone from that of Count Czernin, and apparently of an opposite purpose. It confirms, I am sorry to say, rather than removes, the unfortunate impression made by what we had learned of the conferences at Brest-Litovsk. His discussion and acceptance of our general principles lead him to no practical conclusions. He refuses to apply them to the substantive items which must constitute the body of any final settlement. He is jealous of international action and of international counsel. He accepts, he says, the principle of public diplomacy, but he appears to insist that it be confined—at any rate in this case—to generalities; and that the several particular questions of territory and sovereignty, the several questions upon whose settlement must depend the acceptance of peace by the twenty-three States now engaged in the war, must be discussed and settled, not in general council, but severally by the nations most immediately concerned by interest or neighborhood.

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It must be evident to every one who understands what this war has wrought in the opinion and temper of the world that no general peace, no peace worth the infinite sacrifices of these years of tragical suffering, can possibly be arrived at in any such fashion. The method the Ger-

man Chancellor proposes is the method of the Congress of Vienna. We cannot and will not return to that. What is at stake now is the peace of the world. What we are striving for is a new international order based upon broad and universal principles of right and justice—no mere peace of shreds and patches. Is it possible that Count von Hertling does not see that, does not grasp it, is in fact living in his thought in a world dead and gone? Has he utterly forgotten the Reichstag resolutions of the 19th of July, or does he deliberately ignore them? They spoke of the conditions of a general peace, not of national aggrandizement or of arrangements between State and State.

The peace of the world depends upon the just settlement of each of the several problems to which I adverted in my recent address to the Congress. I of course do not mean that the peace of the world depends upon the acceptance of any particular set of suggestions as to the way in which those problems are to be dealt with. I mean only that those problems each and all affect the whole world; that unless they are dealt with in a spirit of unselfish and unbiased justice, with a view to the wishes, the natural connections, the racial aspirations, the security, and the peace of mind of the peoples involved, no permanent peace will have been attained. They cannot be discussed separately or in corners. None of them constitutes a private or separate interest from which the opinion of the world may be shut out. Whatever affects the peace affects mankind; and nothing settled by military force, if settled wrong, is settled at all. It will presently have to be reopened.

Is Count von Hertling not aware that he is speaking in the court of mankind; that all the awakened nations of

the world now sit in judgment on what every public man, of whatever nation, may say on the issues of a conflict which has spread to every region of the world? The Reichstag resolutions of July themselves frankly accepted the decisions of that court. There shall be no annexations, no contributions, no punitive damages. Peoples are not to be handed about from one sovereignty to another by an international conference or an understanding between rivals and antagonists. National aspirations must be respected; peoples may now be dominated and governed only by their own consent. "Self-determination" is not a mere phrase. It is an imperative principle of action, which statesmen will henceforth ignore at their peril. We cannot have general peace for the asking, or by the mere arrangements of a peace conference. It cannot be pieced together out of individual understandings between powerful States. All the parties of this war must join in the settlement of every issue anywhere involved in it; because what we are seeking is a peace that we can all unite to guarantee and maintain, and every item of it must be submitted to the common judgment whether it be right and fair, an act of justice, rather than a bargain between sovereigns.

The United States has no desire to interfere in European affairs or to act as arbiter in European territorial disputes. She would disdain to take advantage of any internal weakness or disorder to impose her own will upon another people. She is quite ready to be shown that the settlements she has suggested are not the best or the most enduring. They are only her own provisional sketch of principles and of the way in which they should be applied. But she entered this war because she was made a partner, whether she would or not, in the sufferings and indignities

inflicted by the military masters of Germany against the peace and security of mankind; and the conditions of peace will touch her as nearly as they will touch any other nation to which is entrusted a leading part in the maintenance of civilization. She cannot see her way to peace until the causes of this war are removed, its renewal rendered as nearly as may be impossible.

This war had its roots in the disregard of the rights of small nations and of nationalities which lacked the union and the force to make good their claim to determine their own allegiances and their own forms of political life. Covenants must now be entered into which will render such things impossible for the future; and those covenants must be backed by the united force of all the nations that love justice and are willing to maintain it at any cost. If territorial settlements and the political relations of great populations which have not the organized power to resist are to be determined by the contracts of the powerful Governments which consider themselves most directly affected, as Count von Hertling proposes, why may not economic questions also? It has come about in the altered world in which we now find ourselves that justice and the rights of peoples affect the whole field of international dealing, as much as access to raw materials and fair and equal conditions of trade. Count von Hertling wants the essential bases of commercial and industrial life to be safeguarded by common agreement and guaranty; but he cannot expect that to be conceded him if the other matters to be determined by the articles of peace are not handled in the same way, as items in the final accounting. He cannot ask the benefit of common agreement in the one field without according it in the other. I take it for granted that he sees that separate

and selfish compacts with regard to trade and the essential materials of manufacture would afford no foundation for peace. Neither, he may rest assured, will separate and selfish compacts with regard to provinces and peoples.

Count Czernin seems to see the fundamental elements of peace with clear eyes, and does not seek to obscure them. He sees that an independent Poland, made up of all the indisputably Polish peoples who lie contiguous to one another, is a matter of European concern and must of course be conceded; that Belgium must be evacuated and restored, no matter what sacrifices and concessions that may involve; and that national aspirations must be satisfied, even within his own Empire, in the common interest of Europe and mankind. If he is silent about questions which touch the interest and purpose of his allies more nearly than they touch those of Austria only, it must of course be because he feels constrained, I suppose, to defer to Germany and Turkey in the circumstances. Seeing and conceding, as he does, the essential principles involved and the necessity of candidly applying them, he naturally feels that Austria can respond to the purpose of peace as expressed by the United States with less embarrassment than could Germany. He would probably have gone much further had it not been for the embarrassments of Austria's alliances and of her dependence upon Germany.

After all, the test of whether it is possible for either Government to go any further in this comparison of views is simple and obvious. The principles to be applied are these:

First, that each part of the final settlement must be based upon the essential justice of that particular case and upon such adjustments as are most likely to bring a peace that will be permanent;

Second, that peoples and provinces are not to be bartered about from sovereignty to sovereignty as if they were mere chattels and pawns in a game, even the great game, now forever discredited, of the balance of power; but that—

Third, every territorial settlement involved in this war must be made in the interest and for the benefit of the populations concerned, and not as a part of any mere adjustment or compromise of claims amongst rival States; and—

Fourth, that all well-defined national aspirations shall be accorded the utmost satisfaction that can be accorded them without introducing new or perpetuating old elements of discord and antagonism that would be likely in time to break the peace of Europe and consequently of the world.

A general peace erected upon such foundations can be discussed. Until such a peace can be secured we have no choice but to go on. So far as we can judge, these principles that we regard as fundamental are already everywhere accepted as imperative, except among the spokesmen of the military and annexationist party in Germany. If they have anywhere else been rejected, the objectors have not been sufficiently numerous or influential to make their voices audible. The tragical circumstance is that this one party in Germany is apparently willing and able to send millions of men to their death to prevent what all the world now sees to be just.

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FROM PRESIDENT WILSON'S SPEECH AT BALTIMORE ON APRIL 6, 1918

I have sought to learn from those who spoke for Germany whether it was justice or dominion and the execution of their own will upon the other nations of the world that the German leaders were seeking. They have an-

swered—answered in unmistakable terms. They have avowed that it was not justice, but dominion and the unhindered execution of their will.

The avowal has not come from Germany's statesmen. It has come from her military leaders, who are her real rulers. Her statesmen have said that they wished peace, and were ready to discuss its terms whenever their opponents were willing to sit down at the conference table with them. Her present Chancellor has said—in indefinite and uncertain terms, indeed, and in phrases that often seem to deny their own meaning, but with as much plainness as he thought prudent—that he believed that peace should be based upon the principles which we had declared would be our own in the final settlement.

At Brest-Litovsk her civilian delegates spoke in similar terms; professed their desire to conclude a fair peace and accord to the peoples with whose fortunes they were dealing the right to choose their own allegiances. But action accomplished and followed the profession. Their military masters, the men who act for Germany and exhibit her purpose in execution, proclaimed a very different conclusion. We cannot mistake what they have done—in Russia, in Finland, in the Ukraine, in Rumania. The real test of their justice and fair play has come. From this we may judge the rest.

They are enjoying in Russia a cheap triumph in which no brave or gallant nation can long take pride. A great people, helpless by their own act, lies for the time at their mercy. Their fair professions are forgotten. They nowhere set up justice, but everywhere impose their power and exploit everything for their own use and aggrandizement, and the peoples of conquered provinces are invited to be free under their dominion!

Are we not justified in believing that they would do the same things at their western front if they were not there face to face with armies whom even their countless divisions cannot overcome? If, when they have felt their check to be final, they should propose favorable and equitable terms with regard to Belgium and France and Italy, could they blame us if we concluded that they did so only to assure themselves of a free hand in Russia and the East?

Their purpose is, undoubtedly, to make all the Slavic peoples, all the free and ambitious nations of the Baltic Peninsula, all the lands that Turkey has dominated and misruled, subject to their will and ambition, and build upon that dominion an empire of force upon which they fancy that they can then erect an empire of gain and commercial supremacy—an empire as hostile to the Americans as to the Europe which it will overawe—an empire which will ultimately master Persia, India, and the peoples of the Far East.

In such a program our ideals, the ideals of justice and humanity and liberty, the principle of the free self-determination of nations, upon which all the modern world insists, can play no part. They are rejected for the ideals of power, for the principle that the strong must rule the weak, that trade must follow the flag, whether those to whom it is taken welcome it or not, that the peoples of the world are to be made subject to the patronage and overlordship of those who have the power to enforce it.

That program once carried out, America and all who care or dare to stand with her must arm and prepare themselves to contest the mastery of the world—a mastery in which the rights of common men, the rights of

women and of all who are weak, must for the time being be trodden underfoot and disregarded, and the old, age-long struggle for freedom and right begin again at its beginning. Everything that America has lived for and loved and grown great to vindicate and bring to a glorious realization will have fallen in utter ruin and the gates of mercy once more pitilessly shut upon mankind!

The thing is preposterous and impossible; and yet is not that what the whole course and action of the German armies have meant wherever they have moved? I do not wish, even in this moment of utter disillusionment, to judge harshly or unrighteously. I judge only what the German arms have accomplished with unpitying thoroughness throughout every fair region they have touched.

What, then, are we to do? For myself, I am ready, ready still, ready even now, to discuss a fair and just and honest peace at any time that it is sincerely purposed —a peace in which the strong and the weak shall fare alike. But the answer, when I proposed such a peace, came from the German commanders in Russia, and I cannot mistake the meaning of the answer.

I accept the challenge. I know that you will accept it. . . .

Germany has once more said that force, and force alone, shall decide whether justice and peace shall reign in the affairs of men, whether right as America conceives it or dominion as she conceives it shall determine the destinies of mankind. There is, therefore, but one response possible from us: Force, force to the utmost, force without stint or limit, the righteous and triumphant force which shall make right the law of the world and cast every selfish dominion down in the dust.

THE PEACE OF BUCHAREST

After the Central Powers had concluded peace with the Bolshevist Government and the Ukraine, Rumania was left in a position of isolation from the rest of her allies, and forced to conclude peace at Bucharest on May 6, 1918.

The following account of the negotiations and its results appeared in the *New York Times Current History of the War* for June, 1918, pp. 530–531.

When the treaty with the Ukraine was signed Rumanian Headquarters received a note from General Morgen, the German Commander-in-Chief, saying that, as peace with Russia had been concluded, the Rumanian armistice had come to an end, and that delegates should be sent without delay to Focsani to examine the new situation. The Rumanian delegates arrived at Focsani next day. They were received with such insolence by the German delegates that the Chief of the Rumanian General Staff, General Lupesco, threatened to leave immediately. The discussions, however, did not last very long, and the mission came back with the announcement that Rumania had to decide within four days whether she was ready to discuss peace terms or not. A Crown Council was held immediately; and the majority of the Generals declared that the army could resist for a month at the most. M. Bratiano and M. Take Jonescu, who could not consent to make peace with the enemy, resigned, and the King asked General Averescu, the most popular man in Rumania, to form a new Cabinet.

Meanwhile, King Ferdinand received a telegram from Berlin, by which he was warned that the Austro-German

Government would not discuss peace terms with a Cabinet which included M. Bratiano or any member of his former Cabinet. The feelings of the King of Rumania—when he saw that even before peace discussions had begun the enemy had begun to interfere in Rumania's internal politics—can be appreciated. But King Ferdinand carried his head high, as he had done all through the tragic misfortunes of his country, and was indifferent to German arrogance. He replied to Herr von Kühlmann that Rumania was an independent country, and had a right to any Government she pleased. But none of the members of the former Cabinet came into the new one. General Averescu formed a Government which had the tragic task of concluding peace, and thus of annihilating, temporarily at least, all the tremendous efforts that Rumania had made during the preceding fifty years to become, economically as well as politically, the leading power in the Balkans.

The peace negotiations were supposed to last for a fortnight at most. In fact, they were nothing more than a farce, for the Germans allowed no discussion at all. They simply laid their preliminary conditions before the Rumanian delegates, and, taking advantage of the military helplessness of Rumania, told them: "You can take it or can leave it." The Rumanian delegates made a few attempts to discuss the German terms, but they soon found that it was useless and that the only thing to do was to yield.

The fact was that Rumania had to satisfy three hungry enemies. Each had his own object, but in each case the result was the same from the point of view of Rumania—subjection to the German yoke. The Bulgarians were eager to accomplish their ideal of "a great Bulgaria" by

the annexation of the Dobrudja. Therefore, Rumania had to give up the Dobrudja. The Austrians, under Magyar pressure, demanded the surrender of the Carpathian passes—a condition which was pressed by Count Czernin, who remembered with bitterness the rebuff that he had suffered from the Rumanian King and Government at the time when Rumania came into the war. The Germans were determined to seize the immensely rich oilfields of Rumania and to secure for an unlimited period Rumanian wheat for Germany at a price to be fixed by German authorities. For years Germany had tried to get control of the Rumanian oilfields. Where bribes and the offer of a heavy price had failed, the chance of war now insured success. The oilfields were seized nominally by way of a monopoly for ninety-nine years.

As usual, Germany's allies had to yield up some of the prey to her. Thus the Germans succeeded in setting up a condominium over the most important part of the Dobrudja, between Constanza and the mouths of the Danube. From Campina, the centre of the oilfields district, a pipe line runs direct to Constanza, where the oil can be stored in enormous tanks, which were left practically untouched when Constanza was abandoned in November, 1916. It is essential for Germany that she should control the pipe line, and this she will certainly do under the form of the condominium.

As for the grain supply, the Germans, who had had to pay a heavy price for Rumanian grain before Rumania went to war, owing especially to British competition, were particularly careful to insure now against the repetition of anything so unpleasant. The form of the agreement which was dictated to Rumania on this point is

that the surplus is to go to Germany after the needs of Rumania have been satisfied. What the needs of Rumania may be will be decided by a Rumanian commission; but this is to be under German control, and there is not much doubt that the ration allowed to the Rumanian population will be proportioned pretty accurately to the needs of Germany.

These territorial and economic advantages secured, Germany went on to add humiliation for Rumania to the heavy toll of material loss. They insisted that the eight Rumanian divisions which were holding the Rumanian front should be demobilized at once under the control of German staff officers. Finally, the Germans asked that the Rumanian Government should give all possible facilities to a German force to pass through Rumania to Odessa. In point of fact, on March 10, long before the peace conditions were settled, the first German battalions passed through Galatz on their way to the Ukraine.

All these humiliating conditions had to be accepted. The motive of the Germans in piling up their actions so frequently was evidently to compel the Averescu Cabinet, which they suspected of being pro-ally, to resign. They hoped to force the King to form a Cabinet of their Bucharest friends. In this they succeeded. The present Government of Rumania may be pro-German; but the Rumanian Nation—from the last peasant soldier, who brought the Germans to a stand last Summer at Maraseshti and Oitoz, to the King—bitterly hates everything German.

Rumania was, however, to receive compensation in Bessarabia, formerly a part of Russia, whose national assembly had voted for union with Rumania on April 29.

The attitude of the Rumanians is represented in the

statement of General Averescu, the Prime Minister, quoted in the same article, p. 529).

"If Rumania accepts the humiliating German peace terms and is ready to yield to her enemies the dearest part of her territory, she does not do it only to spare the lives of the remnants of her army, but for the sake of her allies, too. If Rumania refuses the German conditions to-day she may be able to resist another month, but the results will be fatal. A month later she might have to lose even the shadow of independence which is left to her now; and then, no doubt, the Germans would deal with her in the same way as they dealt with occupied France and with Belgium. The whole Rumanian army would be made prisoners, and would be sent to work on the western front against the Allies, while the civilian population would be compelled to work in ammunition and other factories for the Kaiser's army. I fought in the ranks in 1877 to help my country to win the Dobrudja. You may imagine how I feel now, having to sign the treaty which gives it to our worst enemies. But we are compelled to amputate an important part of our body in order to save the rest of it. However painful it may be, we are bound to do it."

FROM AN ADDRESS BY FOREIGN SECRETARY ARTHUR J. BALFOUR

(Delivered in Parliament June 20, 1918, in reply to a Labor member.)

"Have the German Government ever openly and plainly said in any document or in any speech that Belgium is to be given up, that Belgium is to be restored, that Belgium is to be placed in a position of absolute

economic as well as political independence? I know of no such statement. It has been suggested that Belgian territory should be restored, and there have been other suggestions of one kind or another, but you will never find any frank avowal that Belgium, having been taken by one of the most iniquitous acts of which history has record, is to be put back so far as the perpetrators of the crime are concerned as far as possible in the position in which she was before the crime was committed. . . .

"The Allies are prepared to listen collectively to all reasonable arrangements. Certainly his Majesty's Government are not going to shut their ears to anything that can be called a reasonable suggestion. If such a suggestion was made which met with the approval of the Allies collectively, does the honorable gentleman really suppose that the fact that three years ago, or whenever it may have been, they took a different view would stand in the way of accepting this reasonable suggestion? Of course it would not. Any proposal to the Allies will be considered by the Allies on its merits. The so-called secret treaties were entered into by this country with other members of the alliance, and to these treaties we stand. The national honor is bound up with them. . . .

"So far as we are concerned, we are bound by the Italian treaty, and we mean to hold by it. But it is a profound error to suppose that the time will come when the British Government, surveying the whole situation, and the Italian Government, surveying the whole situation, will find themselves in this position: The British Government saying, 'I think you ought to make peace in spite of this treaty,' and the Italian Government saying, 'There is the treaty, and we mean to hold to every word of it.' When the time comes the treaty may be a

proper instrument to carry out in every detail. What I say is that, whatever judgment may be come to, when the time comes, by the British Government is probably the judgment which the Italian Government would share to the full, and the judgment made by the Italian Government is the judgment which the English Government would share to the full. I have no reason to think that in the future, any more than in the past, there will be any divergence between the Allies for carrying on this war. If it should turn out that, in the common interest of the Allies as a whole, treaties made some years ago should require modification, I do not know whether a modification will be made by the Italians themselves. It rests with them; they are our ally, and we are bound to them, and we mean to keep to the full to the bargain we have made. . . .

"As far as I can make it out, his criticism is that we went to war for Belgium and France, and that if Belgium and France are satisfied why should we think of Italy? That spirit is a fatal spirit, because you might change it round, and you might say to Italy, 'You are bound by the alliance, very good terms are offered to you, why do you bother about anything else?' You cannot work an alliance on those terms. The only terms on which you can work an alliance are those of mutual confidence and mutual trust, and the only way you can have mutual confidence and mutual trust is by being open and above-board with those with whom you are working. . . .

"All of us (the Government) think that no conclusion can be honorable or satisfactory which makes it perfectly plain that the peace is only a truce. All of us are desirous of seeing, as far as may be, that the wishes of the populations of the world shall meet with their due satisfaction.

All of us are anxious to see that whatever arrangements may be come to at the peace conference, whenever the peace conference takes place, shall be of such a kind as to leave as few of those eternal causes of friction and jealousy which divide small nations even more than they divide big nations, and shall by removing those causes of jealousy give greater security for the future peace of the world than any mere treaties can ever give. To that rearrangement of territory or of constitution, supplemented, as I hope it will be, by a league of nations for the enforcement of peace, to those two changes in the international constitution of the world I look forward as the real security of peace."

FROM VON KÜHLMANN'S REICHSTAG ADDRESS

(June 24, 1918.)

I consider it necessary to say quite simply, and in a way easy for all to understand, what our positive desires are. We wish for the German people and our allies a free, strong, independent existence within the boundaries drawn for us by history. We desire overseas possessions corresponding to our greatness and wealth; the freedom of the sea, carrying our trade to all parts of the world. These, in brief, are our roughly sketched aims, the realization of which is absolutely vital and necessary for Germany.

In view of the magnitude of this war and the number of powers, including those from overseas, that are engaged, its end can hardly be expected through purely military decisions alone and without recourse to diplomatic negotiations.

[The anger of Pan-Germans and militarists at these sentiments forced Von Kühlmann to resign as Foreign Secretary on July 9.]

FROM THE MOUNT VERNON ADDRESS

By President Woodrow Wilson

(Delivered at the grave of Washington, July 4, 1918.)

This, then, is our conception of the great struggle in which we are engaged. The plot is written plain upon every scene and every act of the supreme tragedy. On the one hand stand the peoples of the world—not only the peoples actually engaged, but many others, also, who suffer under mastery but cannot act; peoples of many races and in every part of the world—the people of stricken Russia still, among the rest, though they are for the moment unorganized and helpless. Opposed to them, masters of many armies, stand an isolated, friendless group of Governments, who speak no common purpose, but only selfish ambitions of their own, by which none can profit but themselves, and whose peoples are fuel in their hands; Governments which fear their people, and yet are for the time being sovereign lords, making every choice for them and disposing of their lives and fortunes as they will, as well as of the lives and fortunes of every people who fall under their power—Governments clothed with the strange trappings and the primitive authority of an age that is altogether alien and hostile to our own. The Past and the Present are in deadly grapple, and the peoples of the world are being done to death between them.

There can be but one issue. The settlement must be final. There can be no compromise. No halfway de-

cision would be tolerable. No halfway decision is conceivable. These are the ends for which the associated peoples of the world are fighting and which must be conceded them before there can be peace:

I. The destruction of every arbitrary power anywhere that can separately, secretly, and of its single choice disturb the peace of the world; or, if it cannot be presently destroyed, at the least its reduction to virtual impotence.

II. The settlement of every question, whether of territory, of sovereignty, of economic arrangement, or of political relationship, upon the basis of the free acceptance of that settlement by the people immediately concerned, and not upon the basis of the material interest or advantage of any other nation or people which may desire a different settlement for the sake of its own exterior influence or mastery.

III. The consent of all nations to be governed in their conduct toward each other by the same principles of honor and of respect for the common law of civilized society that govern the individual citizens of all modern States in their relations with one another; to the end that all promises and covenants may be sacredly observed, no private plots or conspiracies hatched, no selfish injuries wrought with impunity, and a mutual trust established upon the handsome foundation of a mutual respect for right.

IV. The establishment of an organization of peace which shall make it certain that the combined power of free nations will check every invasion of right and serve to make peace and justice the more secure by affording a definite tribunal of opinion to which all must submit and by which every international readjustment that

cannot be amicably agreed upon by the peoples directly concerned shall be sanctioned.

These great objects can be put into a single sentence. What we seek is the reign of law, based upon the consent of the governed and sustained by the organized opinion of mankind.

These great ends cannot be achieved by debating and seeking to reconcile and accommodate what statesmen may wish with their projects for balances of power and of national opportunity. They can be realized only by the determination of what the thinking peoples of the world desire, with their longing hope for justice and for social freedom and opportunity.

I can fancy that the air of this place carries the accents of such principles with a peculiar kindness. Here were started forces which the great nation against which they were primarily directed at first regarded as a revolt against its rightful authority, but which it has long since seen to have been a step in the liberation of its own people as well as of the people of the United States; and I stand here now to speak—speak proudly and with confident hope—of the spread of this revolt, this liberation, to the great stage of the world itself! The blinded rulers of Prussia have roused forces they know little of—forces which, once roused, can never be crushed to earth again; for they have at their heart an inspiration and a purpose which are deathless and of the very stuff of triumph!

LLOYD GEORGE ON A LEAGUE OF NATIONS, JULY, 1918

(From an Address delivered in the City Temple, London, to the National Council of Evangelical Free Churches.*)

No man had discoursed so eloquently on the league of nations as the Kaiser. He would have satisfied the most exacting critic in the Free Church Council. His reply to the Pope breathed the spirit of brotherhood and Christian kindliness. There was never a word about giving up Belgium, but there were whole passages on disarmament. Not a syllable about surrendering Lithuania and Courland, but on the league of nations he was absolutely sound.

He said he would not only accept the league of nations, but Germany was prepared to place herself at the head of it. When I saw that I knew what he really meant. Then you found the spirit of dominancy still there—a dagger wrapped in the Sermon on the Mount.

We have had treaties before; we must now know that we can give them reality. Millions of young men from the British Empire, from France and Italy—and in due time there will be millions from America—are engaged in demonstrating at the risk of their lives to the Prussian war lords that the world has reached that stage of civilization where justice can be enforced against the most powerful nations that trample upon its decrees. These are the true apostles of the league of nations. If they fail all leagues will be shams, and all treaties will continue to be

* During June and July, 1918, there was much discussion in England on the question of a League of Nations. Viscount Grey published a booklet on the subject on June 20th, and the point came up in the House of Lords in the two weeks following, where it was treated favorably. See London *Times* for June 24–28, 1918.

nothing but scraps of paper. If they succeed—and they will—the league of nations will be an established fact. Then you may beat your swords into plowshares, not until then.

If any man here or elsewhere can show me any way by which we can make peace without betraying the great and sacred cause for which we entered the war, and for which so many millions have sacrificed their lives, to him will I listen gladly, gratefully, and thank God for the light which is given me.

Short of that, mere peace talk is undermining fibre and morale.

HERTLING'S ATTITUDE ON PEACE, JULY 10, 1918

(Count Georg von Hertling, the Imperial German Chancellor, expressed the German official attitude with regard to peace overtures in an address to the Reichstag on July 10, 1918. His references to peace were as follows:)

In the direction of our policy nothing will be changed. If, in spite of these hostile statements by these statesmen, any serious efforts for a paving of the way to peace were to show themselves anywhere, then, quite certainly, we would not adopt a negative attitude from the very beginning, but we would examine these seriously meant—I say expressly seriously—efforts immediately with scrupulous care.

Naturally, it is not sufficient when some agent or other approaches us and says to us: "I can bring about peace negotiations, then and there." But it is necessary for the appointed representatives of the enemy powers, duly authorized by their Governments, to give us to under-

stand that discussions are possible, discussions which for the time being naturally will be within a limited circle.

But the statesmen who have spoken up to the present time have not said a word about such possibilities. When such possibilities manifest themselves, and when serious inclinations toward peace show themselves on the other side, then we will immediately go into them. That is to say, we will not reject them—and we will speak, to begin, within a small circle.

You will be interested to know how we are working on this standpoint, and certain problems will appear which the present time forces upon us. Exhaustive discussions took place regarding these questions July 1 and 2 at General Headquarters, under the Presidency of the Kaiser.

Naturally, I can only announce here quite generally the lines which were laid down at that time. Regarding the east, we stand on the basis of the peace of Brest-Litovsk, and we wish to see this peace carried out in a loyal manner. That is the wish of the German Imperial Administration, and it is supported in this by the Chief of the Army Administration.

(The portions of the Chancellor's speech relating to Belgium were not given to the press, but on the following day Count Hertling made this statement before the Reichstag Main Committee:)

The present possession of Belgium only means that we have a pawn for future negotiations. We have no intention to keep Belgium in any form whatever.

By the expression pawn is meant that one does not intend to keep what one has in one's hand as a pawn if negotiations bring a favorable result.

What we precisely want, as expressed by us on Feb. 24, is that after the war restored Belgium shall, as a self-

dependent State, not be subject to anybody as a vassal and shall live with us in good friendly relations.

I have held this point of view from the beginning in regard to Belgium, and I still hold it to-day. This side of my policy is fully in conformity with the general lines, the direction of which I yesterday clearly laid before you.

We are waging the war as a war of defense, as we have done from the very beginning, and every imperialistic tendency and every tendency to world domination has been remote from our minds.

What we want is the inviolability of our territory, open air for the expansion of our people in the economic domain, and, naturally, also security in regard to the future. This is completely in conformity with my point of view in regard to Belgium, but how this point of view can be established in detail depends upon future negotiations, and on this point I am unable to give binding declarations.

FROM THE SPEECH OF FRIEDRICH VON PAYER, IMPERIAL VICE-CHANCELLOR OF GERMANY, AT STUTTGART SEPTEMBER 12, 1918

"It is unthinkable that Germany will contribute to the restoration of the despotic Russian Empire, which, by its mere existence, always menaced the world.

"We cannot hand over Poland to Russia nor can we assist in having Finland again placed under the Russian yoke. We cannot leave to their fate the border states which lie on the German frontier and the Baltic, to be subjected against their will to Russian imperialism or thrown into the perils of civil war and anarchy.

"In fact, these states having come to an understanding

with us, as those most nearly interested, can only be an advantage to the world, and we can never permit any one to meddle with us in this matter from the standpoint of the present European balance of power or rather British predominance. . . .

"A preliminary condition for us and our allies is that all the territory should again be restored which we possessed on Aug. 1, 1914. Germany must, therefore, in the first place, receive back her colonies, in which connection the idea of an exchange on the grounds of expediency need not be excluded.

"We Germans, as soon as peace is concluded, can evacuate the occupied regions. We can when once things have been got to that stage, restore Belgium. If we and our allies are once again in possession of what belonged to us and if we first are sure that in Belgium no other state will be more favorably placed than we, then Belgium, I think I may say, can be given back without encumbrance. . . .

"The Flemish question could be solved in accordance with the dictates of justice and wise statesmanship. . . .

"There can be no question, therefore, of our paying, but only whether we should receive compensation for the injuries inflicted on us. We are deeply convinced that as the innocent and attacked party we have a right to indemnification. To go on prosecuting the war, however, to that point would cost us such heavy sacrifices, irreparable by money, that we prefer, on calm reflection, and even with our favorable military situation, to abandon this idea, quite apart from the question of jeopardizing a future peace which would be inevitable if compensation were forcibly urged."

AUSTRIA'S PEACE PROPOSALS, SEPTEMBER 15, 1918

On September 15 the Austro-Hungarian Government directed a proposal to all the belligerents. It deplored the continuance of the war and assumed that the differences of opinion which had prevented the acceptance of the proposal by the Central Powers in December, 1916, had been in some measure worn away. It concluded:

"The Royal and Imperial Government would like, therefore, to propose to the Governments of all the belligerent States to send delegates to a confidential and unbinding discussion on the basic principles for the conclusion of peace, in a place in a neutral country and at a near date that would yet have to be agreed upon—delegates who were charged to make known to one another the conception of their Governments regarding those principles and to receive analogous communications, as well as to request and give frank and candid explanations on all those points which need to be precisely defined.

"The Royal and Imperial Government has the honor to request the Government of ——, through the kind mediation of your Excellency, to bring this communication to the knowledge of the Government of ——."

[The names of the intermediary Government and of that addressed in the particular note dispatched are left blank.]

PRESIDENT WILSON'S REPLY TO AUSTRIA'S PEACE PROPOSALS

Immediately after the receipt of this note in Washington, Secretary Lansing issued the following statement:

"I am authorized by the President to state that the

following will be the reply of this Government to the Austro-Hungarian note proposing an unofficial conference of belligerents:

"'The Government of the United States feels that there is only one reply which it can make to the suggestion of the Imperial Austro-Hungarian Government. It has repeatedly and with entire candor stated the terms upon which the United States would consider peace and can and will entertain no proposal for a conference upon a matter concerning which it has made its position and purpose so plain.'"

FROM PREMIER CLEMENCEAU'S SPEECH TO THE FRENCH SENATE, SEPTEMBER 18, 1918

"What they [the French soldiers] and what you want is to continue fighting victoriously until that moment comes when the enemy will realize that there is no compromise possible between crime and right.

"I have heard the opinion expressed that peace cannot be brought about by military victory, but that was not what Germany said when she plunged the world into the horrors of war and when but yesterday she distributed peoples like so many herds of cattle.

"Germany's decision to have recourse to arms forced us to do likewise. This being so, events must take the course into which Germany impelled them, but what we want is peace, that kind of strong peace which will secure future generations from the abominations of the past.

"Then, *enfants du pays*, forward, forward in the final struggle for the freeing of the people from the last desperate fury of cruel force! Forward all France, to spotless victory! All thinking humanity is with you."

COUNT VON HERTLING'S SECOND REPLY TO PRESIDENT WILSON

In his speech before the Reichstag Main Committee on September 24, 1918, after laying the responsibility for the beginning of the war on England and Russia, and taxing America and President Wilson with imperialism, Count von Hertling restated his position on President Wilson's four principles. He made no mention of holding Belgium on this occasion. It will be recalled that Germany consistently opposed disarmament at The Hague and is the one great power that refused to sign an arbitration treaty with the United States. In general tenor it is as impenitent as its predecessors, and, though admitting that a wrong was done to Belgium, justifies Germany's conduct as self-defense. Its four principles follow:

"Regarding the first point, on February 24 I described the idea of restriction of armaments as thoroughly discussable, adding that the financial position of all the European states after the war would give the most effective support to a solution of this question. Regarding the question of arbitration my standpoint has long been history. I will not go into details, but interesting material which I have before me shows that Germany in the past repeatedly suggested arbitration of disputed questions, the carrying out of which in several cases, however, was prevented by opposition raised in Great Britain or America. If an international understanding could be reached that disputed questions of law between various states must always be submitted to arbitration courts, and if this were made obligatory for members of a league of nations, it would undoubtedly be an important step toward the attainment of the general aim. More precise

prescriptions, especially regarding requisite guarantees for the recognition of verdicts made by arbitration, need careful and thorough consideration.

"I have expressed myself before this on the question of freedom of the seas, which forms a necessary prerequisite for the unrestricted intercourse of states and peoples. Here, however, the greatest difficulties, naturally, are not raised on our side. On a former occasion I pointed out that there must be unhindered access for all nations to the inland seas, no predominant position of Great Britain at Gibraltar and Malta and in the Suez Canal. An English newspaper has called this impudence.

"Finally, there is a protection of small nations. Here we can forthwith and without reserve state that in this matter we have an entirely clear conscience. May, therefore, a league of nations be no mere dream of the future. May the idea deepen, and may the people in all countries zealously concern themselves with the means for its establishment. The first and most important prerequisite will be an energetic will to champion peace and justice."

PRESIDENT WILSON'S ADDRESS

(At the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, Sept. 27, 1918.)

At every turn of the war we gain a fresh consciousness of what we mean to accomplish by it. When our hope and expectation are most excited we think more definitely than before of the issues that hang upon it and of the purposes which must be realized by means of it. For it has positive and well-defined purposes which we did not determine and which we cannot alter. No statesman or assembly created them; no statesman or assembly can

alter them. They have arisen out of the very nature and circumstances of the war. The most that statesmen or assemblies can do is to carry them out or be false to them. They were perhaps not clear at the outset; but they are clear now. The war has lasted more than four years and the whole world has been drawn into it. The common will of mankind has been substituted for the particular purposes of individual States. Individual statesmen may have started the conflict, but neither they nor their opponents can stop it as they please. It has become a peoples' war, and peoples of all sorts and races, of every degree of power and variety of fortune, are involved in its sweeping processes of change and settlement. We came into it when its character had become fully defined and it was plain that no nation could stand apart or be indifferent to its outcome. Its challenge drove to the heart of everything we cared for and lived for. The voice of the war had become clear and gripped our hearts. Our brothers from many lands, as well as our own murdered dead under the sea, were calling to us, and we responded, fiercely and of course.

The air was clear about us. We saw things in their full, convincing proportions as they were; and we have seen them with steady eyes and unchanging comprehension ever since. We accepted the issues of the war as facts, not as any group of men either here or elsewhere had defined them, and we can accept no outcome which does not squarely meet and settle them. Those issues are these:

Shall the military power of any nation or group of nations be suffered to determine the fortunes of peoples over whom they have no right to rule except the right of force?

Shall strong nations be free to wrong weak nations and make them subject to their purpose and interest?

Shall peoples be ruled and dominated, even in their own internal affairs, by arbitrary and irresponsible force or by their own will and choice?

Shall there be a common standard of right and privilege for all peoples and nations or shall the strong do as they will and the weak suffer without redress?

Shall the assertion of right be haphazard and by casual alliance or shall there be a common concert to oblige the observance of common rights?

No man, no group of men, chose these to be the issues of the struggle. They *are* the issues of it; and they must be settled—by no arrangement or compromise or adjustment of interests, but definitely and once for all and with a full and unequivocal acceptance of the principle that the interest of the weakest is as sacred as the interest of the strongest.

This is what we mean when we speak of a permanent peace, if we speak sincerely, intelligently, and with a real knowledge and comprehension of the matter we deal with.

We are all agreed that there can be no peace obtained by any kind of bargain or compromise with the Governments of the Central Empires, because we have dealt with them already and have seen them deal with other Governments that were parties to this struggle, at Brest-Litovsk and Bucharest. They have convinced us that they are without honor and do not intend justice. They observe no covenants, accept no principle but force and their own interest. We cannot "come to terms" with them. They have made it impossible. The German people must by this time be fully aware that we cannot accept the word of those who forced this war upon us.

We do not think the same thoughts or speak the same language of agreement.

It is of capital importance that we should also be explicitly agreed that no peace shall be obtained by any kind of compromise or abatement of the principles we have avowed as the principles for which we are fighting. There should exist no doubt about that. I am, therefore, going to take the liberty of speaking with the utmost frankness about the practical implications that are involved in it.

If it be indeed and in truth the common object of the Governments associated against Germany and of the nations whom they govern, as I believe it to be, to achieve by the coming settlements a secure and lasting peace, it will be necessary that all who sit down at the peace table shall come ready and willing to pay the price, the only price, that will procure it; and ready and willing, also, to create in some virile fashion the only instrumentality by which it can be made certain that the agreements of the peace will be honored and fulfilled.

That price is impartial justice in every item of the settlement, no matter whose interest is crossed; and not only impartial justice, but also the satisfaction of the several peoples whose fortunes are dealt with. That indispensable instrumentality is a League of Nations formed under covenants that will be efficacious. Without such an instrumentality, by which the peace of the world can be guaranteed, peace will rest in part upon the word of outlaws, and only upon that word. For Germany will have to redeem her character, not by what happens at the peace table but by what follows.

And, as I see it, the constitution of that League of Nations and the clear definition of its objects must be a

part, is in a sense the most essential part, of the peace settlement itself. It cannot be formed now. If formed now, it would be merely a new alliance confined to the nations associated against a common enemy. It is not likely that it could be formed after the settlement. It is necessary to guarantee the peace; and the peace cannot be guaranteed as an afterthought. The reason, to speak in plain terms again, why it must be guaranteed is that there will be parties to the peace whose promises have proved untrustworthy, and means must be found in connection with the peace settlement itself to remove that source of insecurity. It would be folly to leave the guarantee to the subsequent voluntary action of the Governments we have seen destroy Russia and deceive Rumania.

But these general terms do not disclose the whole matter. Some details are needed to make them sound less like a thesis and more like a practical program. These, then, are some of the particulars, and I state them with the greater confidence because I can state them authoritatively as representing this Government's interpretation of its own duty with regard to peace:

First, the impartial justice meted out must involve no discrimination between those to whom we wish to be just and those to whom we do not wish to be just. It must be a justice that plays no favorites and knows no standard but the equal rights of the several peoples concerned;

Second, no special or separate interest of any single nation or any group of nations can be made the basis of any part of the settlement which is not consistent with the common interest of all;

Third, there can be no leagues or alliances or special

covenants and understandings within the general and common family of the League of Nations;

Fourth, and more specifically, there can be no special, selfish economic combinations within the league and no employment of any form of economic boycott or exclusion except as the power of economic penalty by exclusion from the markets of the world may be vested in the League of Nations itself as a means of discipline and control;

Fifth, all international agreements and treaties of every kind must be made known in their entirety to the rest of the world.

Special alliances and economic rivalries and hostilities have been the prolific source in the modern world of the plans and passions that produce war. It would be an insincere as well as an insecure peace that did not exclude them in definite and binding terms.

The confidence with which I venture to speak for our people in these matters does not spring from our traditions merely and the well-known principles of international action which we have always professed and followed. In the same sentence in which I say that the United States will enter into no special arrangements or understandings with particular nations, let me say also that the United States is prepared to assume its full share of responsibility for the maintenance of the common covenants and understandings upon which peace must henceforth rest. We still read Washington's immortal warning against "entangling alliances" with full comprehension and an answering purpose. But only special and limited alliances entangle; and we recognize and accept the duty of a new day in which we are permitted to hope for a general alli-

ance which will avoid entanglements and clear the air of the world for common understandings and the maintenance of common rights.

I have made this analysis of the international situation which the war has created, not, of course, because I doubted whether the leaders of the great nations and peoples with whom we are associated were of the same mind and entertained a like purpose, but because the air every now and again gets darkened by mists and groundless doubtings and mischievous perversions of counsel and it is necessary once and again to sweep all the irresponsible talk about peace intrigues and weakening morale and doubtful purpose on the part of those in authority utterly, and, if need be, unceremoniously, aside and say things in the plainest words that can be found, even when it is only to say over again what has been said before, quite as plainly if in less unvarnished terms.

As I have said, neither I nor any other man in governmental authority created or gave form to the issues of this war. I have simply responded to them with such vision as I could command. But I have responded gladly and with a resolution that has grown warmer and more confident as the issues have grown clearer and clearer. It is now plain that they are issues which no man can pervert unless it be willfully. I am bound to fight for them, and happy to fight for them as time and circumstance have revealed them to me as to all the world. Our enthusiasm for them grows more and more irresistible as they stand out in more and more vivid and unmistakable outline.

And the forces that fight for them draw into closer and closer array, organize their millions into more and more

unconquerable might, as they become more and more distinct to the thought and purpose of the peoples engaged. It is the peculiarity of this great war that while statesmen have seemed to cast about for definitions of their purpose and have sometimes seemed to shift their ground and their point of view, the thought of the mass of men, whom statesmen are supposed to instruct and lead, has grown more and more unclouded, more and more certain of what it is that they are fighting for. National purposes have fallen more and more into the background and the common purpose of enlightened mankind has taken their place. The counsels of plain men have become on all hands more simple and straightforward and more unified than the counsels of sophisticated men of affairs, who still retain the impression that they are playing a game of power and playing for high stakes. That is why I have said that this is a peoples' war, not a statesmen's. Statesmen must follow the clarified common thought or be broken.

I take that to be the significance of the fact that assemblies and associations of many kinds made up of plain workaday people have demanded, almost every time they came together, and are still demanding, that the leaders of their Governments declare to them plainly what it is, exactly what it is, that they are seeking in this war, and what they think the items of the final settlement should be. They are not yet satisfied with what they have been told. They still seem to fear that they are getting what they ask for only in statesmen's terms—only in the terms of territorial arrangements and divisions of power, and not in terms of broad-visioned justice and mercy and peace and the satisfaction of those deep-seated longings of

oppressed and distracted men and women and enslaved peoples that seem to them the only things worth fighting a war for that engulfs the world. Perhaps statesmen have not always recognized this changed aspect of the whole world of policy and action. Perhaps they have not always spoken in direct reply to the questions asked because they did not know how searching those questions were and what sort of answers they demanded.

But I, for one, am glad to attempt the answer again and again, in the hope that I may make it clearer and clearer that my one thought is to satisfy those who struggle in the ranks and are, perhaps above all others, entitled to a reply whose meaning no one can have any excuse for misunderstanding, if he understands the language in which it is spoken or can get some one to translate it correctly into his own. And I believe that the leaders of the Governments with which we are associated will speak, as they have occasion, as plainly as I have tried to speak. I hope that they will feel free to say whether they think that I am in any degree mistaken in my interpretation of the issues involved or in my purpose with regard to the means by which a satisfactory settlement of those issues may be obtained. Unity of purpose and of counsel are as imperatively necessary in this war as was unity of command in the battlefield; and with perfect unity of purpose and counsel will come assurance of complete victory. It can be had in no other way. "Peace drives" can be effectively neutralized and silenced only by showing that every victory of the nations associated against Germany brings the nations nearer the sort of peace which will bring security and reassurance to all peoples and make the recurrence of another such struggle of pitiless force

and bloodshed forever impossible, and that nothing else can. Germany is constantly intimating the "terms" she will accept; and always finds that the world does not want terms. It wishes the final triumph of justice and fair dealing.

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